THE LIFE OF JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

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BY

E. R. AND J. PENNELL

ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

The Fifth Edition of this book was exhausted before the war; it has been impracticable to reprint it until now, and the present Sixth Edition has been revised and brought up to date with material, including new illustrations, which has come to hand in the interval. The book has been translated into French, and other translations are foreshadowed, for the popularity of Whistler has constantly increased. There have been many exhibitions of his paintings in Europe and in America; galleries and private collectors are competing for anything they can acquire. The portrait of his mother has even served as a placard for war propaganda. Prices paid for Whistler works, paintings as well as lithographs, have steadily increased, and some very remarkable prices have been paid for his portraits of *Mrs. Leyland* and *Lady Meux*—prices which rival those paid for Old Masters. Mr. Freer's collection is on the point of being transferred to Washington, where there is also a collection of Whistleriana, brought together by the authors of this book.

No lives or special works of criticism on Whistler have been published during the war, but a "life" is promised by Mr. Freer which is to correct or "supersede" the authorised life. This book has been long delayed, and so have the Whistler letters, which Miss Philip has in hand.

We wish to thank, for the permission to reproduce paintings and drawings, to consult letters and documents, Mrs. A. J. Cassatt, Mr. Mitchell Kennerley, Mr. Roland Knoedler, Messrs. Keppel and Company, Mr. George J. C. Grasberger, Mr. A. E. Gallatin, Mr. R. C. Frick, Mr. West, Colonel Hughes, Mr. E. G. Kennedy, The Metropolitan Museum of New York, The Maryland Institute, the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Putnam and Dr. Koch, Mr. Roberts, and Miss Wright, also of the Library of Congress.

Joseph Pennell
Elizabeth Robins Pennell

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

Mr. and Mrs. Pennell's authorised *Life of James McNeill Whistler* appeared in two volumes in October 1908, and has had to be reprinted in that form three times since then. Its sale even in that comparatively expensive form has been an unexpectedly large one, proving without doubt that interest in Whistler's life is alive and growing. During the three years since its first publication much new material has come into the hands of the authors, and a complete revision of the book has therefore become necessary. The present volume is, to all intents and purposes, a new one. Many of the older illustrations in the earlier editions have been superseded by new ones, a number of which are reproduced for the first time.

For the new material included in this edition the authors and the publisher are indebted to friends and numerous sympathetic correspondents, and they wish to express their indebtedness especially to Mr. John W. Beatty, Director of the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh; Mr. E. D. Brooks; Mr. Clifford Gore Chambers; Mr. E. T. Cook; Mr. Leon Dabo; Mr. Frederick Dielmann; Messrs. Dowdeswell; M. Théodore Duret; Mr. A. J. Eddy; Mrs. Wickham Flower; Right Hon. Jonathan Hogg; Mr. H. S. Hubbell; Mr. Will H. Low; Mr. Burton Mansfield; Judge Parry; Mr. H. Reinhardt; Mr. H. S. Ridings; Mr. Albert Rouiller; Miss Alice Rouiller; Mr. William Scott; M. Ströhlen; Mr. Ross Turner; Mr. C. F. G. Turner; Mr. C. Howard Walker; Mr. J. H. Wrenn.

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CHAPTER I : THE WHISTLER FAMILY. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN THIRTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN FORTY-THREE.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler was born on July 10, 1834, at Lowell, Massachusetts, in the United States of America.

Whistler, in the witness-box during the suit he brought against Ruskin in 1878, gave St. Petersburg as his birthplace—or the reporters did—and he never denied it. Baltimore was given by M. Théodore Duret in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (April 1881), and M. Duret's mistake, since corrected by him, has been many times repeated. The late Mrs. Livermore, who knew Whistler as a child at Lowell, asked him why he did not contradict this. His answer was : " If any one likes to think I was born in Baltimore, why should I deny it ? It is of no consequence to me ! " On entering West Point he stated that Massachusetts was his place of birth. But, as a rule, he met any one indiscreet enough to question him on the subject as he did the American who came up to him one evening in the Carlton Hotel, London, and by way of introduction said, " You know, Mr. Whistler, we were both born at Lowell, and at very much the same time. There is only the difference of a year—you are sixty-seven and I am sixty-eight." " And I told him," said Whistler, from whom we had the story the next day, " ' Very charming ! And so you are sixty-eight and were born at Lowell ! Most interesting, no doubt, and as you please ! But I shall be born when and where I want, and I do not choose to be born at Lowell, and I refuse to be sixty-seven ! ' "

Whistler was christened at St. Anne's Church, Lowell, November 9, 1834. " Baptized, James Abbott, infant son of George Washington and Anna Mathilda Whistler : Sponsors, the parents. Signed, T. Edson " ; so it is recorded in the church register. He was named after James Abbott, of Detroit, who had married his father's elder sister, Sarah Whistler. McNeill (his mother's name) was added shortly after he entered West Point. Abbott he always kept for legal and official documents. But, eventually, he dropped it for other purposes, " J. A. M." pleasing him no better than " J. A. W.,"

and he signed himself "James McNeill Whistler" or "J. M. N. Whistler."

The Rev. Rose Fuller Whistler, in his *Annals of an English Family* (1887), says that John le Wistler de Westhannye (1272–1307) was the founder of the family. Most of the Whistlers lived in Goring, Whitchurch, or Oxford, and are buried in many a church and churchyard of the Thames Valley. Brasses and tablets to the memory of several are in the church of St. Mary at Goring: one to "Hugh Whistler, the son of Master John Whistler of Goring, who departed this life the 17 Day of Januarie Anno Dominie 1675 being aged 216 years"—an amazing statement, but there it is in the parish church durable as brass can make it, and it would have delighted Whistler. The solemn antiquary, however, has decided that the 21 is only a badly cut 4. This remarkable ancestor figures as a family ghost at Gatehampton, where he is said to have been buried with his money, and there he still walks, guarding the treasure he lived so many years to gather. The position of the Whistlers entitled them to a coat of arms, described in the Harleian MSS., No. 1556, and thus in *Gwillim's Heraldry*: "Gules, five mascles, in bend between two Talbots passant argent"; and the motto "Forward."

The men were mostly soldiers and parsons. A few made names for themselves. The shield of Gabriel Whistler, of Combe, Sussex, is one of six in King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Anthony Whistler, poet, friend of Shenstone, belonged to the Whitchurch family. Dr. Daniel Whistler (1619–1684), of the Essex branch, was a Fellow of Merton, an original Fellow of the Royal Society, a member and afterwards President of the College of Physicians, friend of Evelyn and Pepys. Evelyn often met him in "select companie" at supper, and once "Din'd at Dr. Whistler's at the Physicians Colledge," and found him not only learned but "the most facetious man in nature," the legitimate ancestor of Whistler. Pepys, who also dined and supped with him many times, pronounced him "good company and a very ingenious man." He fell under a cloud with the officials of the College of Physicians, and his portrait has been consigned to a back stairway of the Hall in Pall Mall. In the seventeenth century Ralph Whistler, of the Salters' Company, London, was one of the colonisers of Ulster, and Francis Whistler was a settler of Virginia.

When Whistler saw the name "Francis Whistler, Gentleman," in the *Genesis of the United States*, he said to us, "There is an ancestor, with the hall-mark F.F.V. [First Families of Virginia], who tickles my American snobbery, and washes out the taint of Lowell."

The American Whistlers are descended from John Whistler of the Irish branch. In his youth he ran away and enlisted. Sir Kensington Whistler, an English cousin, was an officer in the same regiment, and objected to having a relative in the ranks. John Whistler, therefore, was transferred to another regiment starting for the American colonies. He arrived in time to surrender at Saratoga with Burgoyne. He went back to England, received his discharge, eloped with Anna, daughter of Sir Edward Bishop or Bischopp, and, returning to America, settled at Hagerstown, Maryland. He again enlisted, this time in the United States army. He rose to the brevet rank of major and served in the war of 1812 against Great Britain. He was stationed at Fort Dearborn, which he helped to build, and Fort Wayne. According to Mr. A. J. Eddy (*Recollections and Impressions of Whistler*), Whistler once said to a visitor from Chicago:

"Chicago, dear me, what a wonderful place! I really ought to visit it some day; for, you know, my grandfather founded the city, and my uncle was the last commander of Fort Dearborn!"

In 1815, upon the reduction of the army, Major John Whistler was retired. He died in 1817, at Bellefontaine, Missouri. Of his fifteen children, three sons are remembered as soldiers, and three daughters married army officers. George Washington, the most distinguished son, was the father of James Abbott McNeill Whistler.

George Washington Whistler was born on May 19, 1800, at Fort Wayne. He was educated mostly at Newport, Kentucky; and from Kentucky, when a little over fourteen, he received his appointment to the Military Academy, West Point, where he is remembered for his gaiety. Mr. George L. Vose, his biographer, and others tell stories that might have been told of his son. One is of some breach of discipline, for which he was made to bestride a gun on the campus. As he sat there he saw, coming towards him, the Miss Swift he was before long to marry. Out came his handkerchief, and, leaning over the gun, he set to work cleaning it so carefully that he was "honoured, not disgraced," in her eyes. He was number one in drawing, and

his playing on the flute won him the nickname "Pipes." He graduated on July 1, 1819. He was appointed second lieutenant in the First Artillery, and, in 1829, first lieutenant in the Second Artillery. He served on topographical duty, and for a few months he was assistant professor at the Academy. There was not much fighting for American officers of his generation. But railroads were being built, and so few were the civil engineers that West Point graduates were allowed by Government to work for private corporations, and he was employed on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the Baltimore and Susquehanna, and the Paterson and Hudson River. For the Baltimore and Ohio he went to England in 1828 to examine the railway system. He was building the line from Stonington to Providence, when, in 1833, he resigned from the army with the rank of major, to carry on his profession as a civil engineer.

In the meanwhile Major Whistler had married twice. His first wife was Mary Swift, daughter of Dr. Foster Swift, of the United States army. She left three children: George, who became a well known civil engineer; Joseph, who died in youth; and Deborah, Lady Haden. His second wife was Anna Mathilda McNeill, daughter of Dr. Charles Donald McNeill, of Wilmington, North Carolina, and sister of William Gibbs McNeill, a West Point classmate and an associate in Major Whistler's engineering work. The McNeills were descended from the McNeills of Skye. Their chief, Donald, emigrated with sixty of his clan to North Carolina in 1746, and bought land on Cape Fear River. Charles Donald McNeill was his grandson and was twice married; his second wife, Martha Kingsley, was the mother of Anna Mathilda McNeill, who became Mrs. George Washington Whistler. The McNeills were related by marriage to the Fairfaxes and other Virginia families, and Whistler, on his mother's side, was the Southerner he loved to call himself.

In 1834 Major Whistler accepted the post of engineer of locks and canals at Lowell, and to this town he brought his family. There, in the Paul Moody House on Worthen Street, James McNeill Whistler was born, and the house is now a Whistler Memorial Museum. Two years later the second son, William Gibbs McNeill, was born. In 1837 Major Whistler moved to Stonington, Connecticut, and Miss Emma W. Palmer and Mrs. Dr. Stanton, his wife's nieces, still re-

member his " pleasant house on Main Street." It is said that he had a chaise fitted with car wheels in which he and his family drove every Sunday on the tracks to church at Westerly; also that a locomotive named Whistler was in use on the road until recently. He was consulted in regard to many new lines, among them the Western Railroad of Massachusetts, for which he was consulting engineer from 1836 to 1840. In 1840 he was made chief engineer, and he removed to Springfield, Massachusetts, where he lived in the Ethan Chapin Homestead on Chestnut Street, north of Edward Street. A third son, Kirk Booth, born at Stonington in 1838, died at Springfield in 1842, and here a fourth son, Charles Donald, was born in 1841.

In 1842 Nicholas I. of Russia sent a commission, under Colonel Melnikoff, round Europe and America to find the best method and the best man to build a railroad from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and they chose the American, George Washington Whistler. The honour was great and the salary large, 12,000 dollars a year. He accepted, and started for Russia in Midsummer 1842, leaving his family at Stonington.

The life of a child, for the first nine years or so, is not of much interest to any save his parents. An idea can be formed of Whistler's early training. His father was a West Point man, with all that is fine in the West Point tradition. Mrs. Whistler, described as " one of the saints upon earth," was as strict as a Puritan. Dr. Whistler—Willie—often told his wife of the dread with which he and Jimmie looked forward to Saturday afternoon, with its overhauling of clothes, emptying of pockets, washing of heads, putting away of toys, and preparation for Sunday, when the Bible was the only book they read. Of the facts of his childhood there are few to record. Mrs. Livermore remembered his baby beauty, so great that her father used to say " it was enough to make Sir Joshua Reynolds come out of his grave and paint Jemmie asleep." In his younger years he was called Jimmie, Jemmie, Jamie, James, and Jim, and we use these names as we have found them in the letters written to us and the books quoted. Mrs. Livermore dwelt on the child's beautiful hands, " which belong to so many of the Whistlers." When she returned to Lowell in 1836 from the Manor School at York, England, Mrs. Whistler's son, Willie, had just been born :

"As soon as Mrs. Whistler was strong enough, she sent for me to go and see her boy, and I did see her and her baby in bed! And then I asked, 'Where is Jemmie, of whom I have heard so much?' She replied, 'He was in the room a short time since, and I think he must be here still.' So I went softly about the room till I saw a very small form prostrate and at full length on the shelf under the dressing-table, and I took hold of an arm and a leg and placed him on my knee, and then said, 'What were you doing, dear, under the table?' 'I'se drawrin',' and in one very beautiful little hand he held the paper, in the other the pencil."

The pencil drawings which we have seen, owned by Mrs. Livermore, are curiously firm and strong for a child of four.

CHAPTER II: IN RUSSIA. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FORTY-THREE TO EIGHTEEN FORTY-NINE.

In 1843, when Whistler was nine years old, Major Whistler sent for his wife and children. Mrs. Whistler sailed from Boston in the *Arcadia*, August 12, 1843, taking with her Deborah and the three boys, James, William, and Charles. George Whistler, Major Whistler's eldest son, and her "good maid Mary" went with them. The story of their journey and their life in Russia is recorded in Mrs. Whistler's journal.

They arrived at Liverpool on the 29th of the same month. Mrs. Whistler's two half-sisters, Mrs. William Winstanley and Miss Alicia McNeill, lived at Preston, and there they stayed a fortnight. Then, after a few days in London, they sailed for Hamburg.

There was no railroad from Hamburg, so they drove by carriage to Lübeck, by stage to Travemünde, where they took the steamer *Alexandra* for St. Petersburg, and George Whistler left them. Between Travemünde and Cronstadt, Charles, the youngest child, fell ill of seasickness and died within a day. There was just time to bury him at Cronstadt—temporarily; he was afterwards buried at Stonington—and his death saddened the meeting between Major Whistler and his wife and children.

Mrs. Whistler objected to hotels and to boarding, and a house was found in the Galernaya. She did her best to make it not only

a comfortable, but an American home, for Major Whistler's attachment to his native land, she said, was so strong as to be almost a religious sentiment. Their food was American, American holidays were kept in American fashion. Many of their friends were Americans. Major Whistler was nominally consulting engineer to Colonel Melnikoff, but actually in charge of the construction and equipment of the line, and as the material was supplied by the firm of Winans of Baltimore, Mr. Winans and his partners, Messrs. Harrison and Eastwick, of Philadelphia, were in Russia with their families.

Mrs. Whistler's strictness did not mean opposition to pleasure. Yet at times she became afraid that her boys were not "keeping to the straight and narrow way." There were evenings of illuminations that put off bedtime; there were afternoons of skating and coasting; Christmas gaieties, with Christmas dinners of roast turkey and pumpkin pie; visits to American friends; parties at home, when the two boys "behaved like gentlemen, and their father commended them upon it"; there were presents of guns from the father, returning from long absences on the road; there were dancing lessons, which Jemmie would have done anything rather than miss.

Whistler as a boy was exactly what those who knew him as a man would expect; gay and bright, absorbed in his work when that work was art, brave and fearless, selfish if selfishness is another name for ambition, considerate and kindly, above all to his mother. The boy, like the man, was delightful to those who understood him; "startling," "alarming," to those who did not.

Mrs. Whistler's journal soon becomes extremely interesting:

March 29 (1844). "I must not omit recording our visiting the Gastinnoi to-day in anticipation of Palm Sunday. Our two boys were most excited, Jemmie's animation roused the wonder of many, for even in crowds here such decorum and gravity prevails that it must be surprising when there is any ebullition of joy."

April 22 (1844). "Jemmie is confined to his bed with a mustard plaster on his throat; he has been very poorly since the thawing season commenced, soon becoming overheated, takes cold; when he complained of pain first in his shoulder, then in his side, my fears of a return of last year's attack made me tremble, and when I gaze upon his pale face sleeping, contrasted to Willie's round cheeks, my heart

is full; our dear James said to me the other day, so touchingly, 'Oh, I am sorry the Emperor ever asked father to come to Russia, but if I had the boys here, I should not feel so impatient to get back to Stonington,' yet I cannot think the climate here affects his health; Willie never was as stout in his native land, and James looks better than when we brought him here. At eight o'clock I am often at my reading or sewing without a candle, and I cannot persuade James to put up his drawing and go to bed while it is light."

The journal explains that Whistler as a boy suffered from severe rheumatic attacks that added to the weakness of his heart, the eventual cause of his death. Major and Mrs. Whistler rented a country-house on the Peterhoff Road in the spring of 1844. There is an account of a day at Tsarskoé Seló, when Colonel Todd, American Minister to Russia, showed them the Palace:

May 6 (1844). "Rode to the station, and took the cars upon the only railroad in Russia, which took us the twenty versts to the pretty town. It would be ungenerous in me to remark how inferior the railroad, cars, &c., seemed to us Americans. The boys were delighted with it all. Jemmie wished he could stay to examine the fine pictures and know who painted them, but as I returned through the grounds I asked him if he should wish to be a grand duke and own it all for playgrounds: he decided there could be no freedom with a footman at his heels."

July 1 (1844). ". . . I went with Willie to do some shopping in the Nevski. He is rather less excitable than Jemmie, and therefore more tractable. They each can make their wants known in Russ., but I prefer this gentlest of my dear boys to go with me. We had hardly reached home when a tremendous shower came up, and Jemmie and a friend, who had been out in a boat on a canal at the end of our avenue, got well drenched. Just as we were seated at tea, a carriage drove up and Mr. Miller entered, introducing Sir William Allen, the great Scotch artist, of whom we have heard lately, who has come to St. Petersburg to revive on canvas some of the most striking events from the life of Peter the Great. They had been to the monastery to listen to the chanting at vespers in the Greek chapel. Mr. Miller congratulated his companion on being in the nick of time for our excellent home-made bread and fresh butter, but, above all, the re-

freshment of a good cup of tea. His chat then turned upon the subject of Sir William Allen's painting of Peter the Great teaching the mujiks to make ships. This made Jemmie's eyes express so much interest that his love for art was discovered, and Sir William must needs see his attempts. When my boys had said good night, the great artist remarked to me, 'Your little boy has uncommon genius, but do not urge him beyond his inclination.' I told him his gift had only been cultivated as an amusement, and that I was obliged to interfere, or his application would confine him more than we approved."

Of these attempts there remain few examples. One is the portrait of his aunt Alicia McNeill, who visited them in Russia in 1844, sent to Mrs. Palmer at Stonington, with the inscription: "James to Aunt Kate." In a letter to Mrs. Livermore, written in French, when he was ten or eleven, "he enclosed some pretty pen-and-ink drawings, each on a separate bit of paper, and each surrounded by a frame of his own designing." He told us he could remember wonderful things he had done during the years in Russia. Once, he said, when on a holiday in London with his father, he was not well, and was given a hot foot-bath, and he could never forget how he sat looking at his foot, and then got paper and colours and set to work to make a study of it, "and in Russia," he added, "I was always doing that sort of thing."

July 4 (1844). "I have given my boys holiday to celebrate the Independence of their country. . . . This morning Jemmie began relating anecdotes from the life of Charles XII. of Sweden, and rather upbraided me that I could not let him do as that monarch had done at seven years old—manage a horse! I should have been at a loss how to afford my boys a holiday, with a military parade to-day, but there was an encampment of cadets, about two estates off, and they went with Colonel T.'s sons to see them."

July 10 (1844). "A poem selected by my daring Jamie and put under my plate at the breakfast-table, as a surprise on his tenth birthday. I shall copy it, that he may be reminded of his happy childhood when perhaps his grateful mother is not with him."

August 20 (1844). ". . . Jemmie is writing a note to his Swedish tutor on his birthday. Jemmie loves him sincerely and gratefully. I suppose his partiality to this Swede makes him espouse his country's

cause and admire the qualities of Charles XII. so greatly to the prejudice of Peter the Great. He has been quite enthusiastic while reading the life of this King of Sweden, this summer, and too willing to excuse his errors."

August 23 (1844). "I wish I could describe the gardens at Peterhoff where we were invited to drive to-day. The fountains are, perhaps, the finest in the world. The water descends in sheets over steps, all the heathen deities presiding. Jemmie was delighted with the figure of Samson tearing open the jaws of the lion, from which ascends a *jet d'eau* one hundred feet. . . . There are some fine pictures, but Peter's own paintings of the feathered race ought to be most highly prized, though our Jemmie was so saucy as to laugh at them."

August 28 (1844). "I avail myself of Col. Todd's invitation to visit Tsarskoé Seló to-day with Aunt Alicia, Deborah, and the two dear boys, who are always so delighted at these little excursions. . . . My little Jemmie's heart was made sad by discovering swords which had been taken in the battle between Peter and Charles XII., for he knew, from their rich hilts set in pearls and precious stones, that they must have belonged to noble Swedes. 'Oh!' he exclaimed, 'I'd rather have one of these than all the other things in the armoury! How beautiful they are!' . . . I was somewhat annoyed that Col. Todd had deemed it necessary to have a dinner party for us.

". . . The colonel proposed the Emperor's health in champagne, which not even the Russian general, who declined wine, could refuse, and even I put my glass to my lips, which so encouraged my little boys that they presented their glasses to be filled, and, forgetting at their little side-tables the guests at ours, called out aloud, '*Santé à l'Empereur!*' The captain clapped his hands with delight, and afterwards addressed them in French. All at the table laughed and called the boys '*Bons sujets.*'"

They were at St. Petersburg again in September, preparing their Christmas gifts for America. Whistler, sending one to his cousin Amos Palmer, wrote in an outburst of patriotism that "the English were going to America to be licked by the Yankees": it was at the time of the disagreement over Oregon Territory. In another letter he gives the Fourth of July as his birthday.

Ash Wednesday (1845). "I avail myself of this Lenten season

to have my boys every morning before breakfast recite a verse from the Psalms, and I, who wish to encourage them, am ready with my response. How very thankful I shall be when the weather moderates so that Jemmie's long imprisonment may end, and Willie have his dear brother with him in the skating grounds and ice-hills. Here comes my good boy Jemmie now, with his history in hand to read to me, as he does every afternoon, as we fear they may lose their own language in other tongues, and thus I gain a half-hour's enjoyment by hearing them read daily."

April 5 (1845). "Our boys have left the breakfast table before eight o'clock to trundle their new hoops on the Quai with their governess, and have brought home such bright red cheeks and buoyant spirits to enter the schoolroom with and to gladden my eyes. Jemmie began his course of drawing lessons at the Academy of Fine Arts just on the opposite side of the Neva, exactly fronting my bedroom window. He is entered at the second room. There are two higher, and he fears he shall not reach them, because the officer who is still to continue his private lesson at home is a pupil himself in the highest, and Jemmie looks up to him with all the reverence an artist merits. He seems greatly to enjoy going to his class, and yesterday had to go by the bridge on account of the ice, and felt very important when he told me he had to give the Isvóshtclók fifteen copecks silver instead of ten."

In the archives of the Imperial Academy of Science there is a "List of Scholars of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts," and in this and the "Class Journal of the Inspector" for 1845 James Whistler is entered as "belonging to the drawing class, heads from Nature." In 1846 he was on March 2 examined and passed as first in his class, the number being twenty-eight. From 1845 to 1849 Professors Vistelious and Voivov were the masters of the life class.

On May 14 (1845) there was a review of troops in St. Petersburg, and the Whistlers saw it from a window in the Prince of Oldenburg's palace.

"Jemmie's eagerness to attain all his desires for information and his fearlessness often makes him offend, and it makes him appear less amiable than he really is. The officers, however, seemed to find amusement in his remarks in French or English as they accosted him. They

were soon informed of his military ardour, and that he hoped to serve his country. England? No, indeed! Russia, then? No, no; America, of course!"

May 2 (1846). "The boys are in the schoolroom now, reading the Roman history in French to M. Lamartine, promising themselves the pleasure of reviewing the pictures at the Academy of Fine Arts at noon, which they have enjoyed almost every day this week. It is the Triennial Exhibition, and we like them to become familiar with the subjects of the modern artists, and to James especially it is the greatest treat we could offer. I went last Wednesday with Whistler and was highly gratified. I should like to take some of the Russian scenes so faithfully portrayed to show in my native land. My James had described a boy's portrait said to be *his* likeness, and although the eyes were black and the curls darker, we found it so like him that his father said he would be glad to buy it, but its frame would only correspond with the furniture of a palace. The boy is taken in a white shirt with crimped frill, open at the throat; it is half-length, and no other garment could show off the glow of the brunette complexion so finely."

May 30 (1846). "Yesterday the Empress was welcomed back to St. Petersburg. Last night the illumination which my boys had been eagerly expecting took place. When at 10.30 they came in, Jamie expressed such an eager desire that I would allow him to be my escort just to take a peep at the Nevski that I could not deny him. The effect of the light from Vasili Ostrow was very beautiful, and as we drove along the Quai, the flowers and decorations of large mansions were, I thought, even more tasteful. We had to fall into a line of carriages in the Isaac Square to enter that Broadway, and just then a shout from the populace announced to us that the Empress was passing. I was terrified lest the poles of their carriage should run into our backs, or that some horses might take fright or bite us, we were so close, but Jamie laughed heartily and aloud at my timidity. He behaved like a man. With one arm he guarded me, and with the other kept the animals at a proper distance; and, I must confess, brilliant as the spectacle was, *my* great pleasure was derived from the conduct of my dear and manly boy."

July 7 (1846). "My two boys found much amusement in pro-

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER AS A BOY

By Sir William Boxall

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 18)

THE TWO BROTHERS. MINIATURE

Lent by Miss Emma Palmer

Formerly in the possession of Mrs. George D. Stanton and Miss Emma W. Palmer

Artist unknown

(See page 19)

pelling themselves on the drawbridge to and from the fancy island in the pond at Mrs. G.'s, where we went to spend the day; they find it such a treat to be in the country, and just run wild, chasing butterflies and picking the wild flowers so abundant. But nothing gave them so much pleasure as their 4th July, spent with their little American friends at Alexandrovsky, the Eastwicks; the fireworks, percussion caps, muskets, horseback riding, &c., made them think it the most delightful place in Russia. In some way James caught cold, and his throat was so inflamed that leeches were applied, and he has been in consequence confined to his room. . . . We spend our mornings in reading, drawing, &c. Then the boys take their row with good John across the Neva, to the morning bath, and in the cool of the afternoon a drive to the island, or a range in the summer gardens, or a row on the river."

July 27 (1846). "Last Wednesday they had another long day in the country, and got themselves into much mischief. They had at last broken the ropes of the drawbridge, by which it was drawn to and from the island, and there were my wild boys prisoners on it. I thought it best for them to remain so, as they were so unruly, but the good-natured dominie was pressed into their service, and swimming to their rescue, ere I could interfere; Jemmie was so drenched by his efforts that dear Mrs. R. took him away to her room to coax him to lie down awhile and to rub him dry, lest his sore throat return to tell a tale of disobedience.

". . . On Thursday there was another grand celebration of the birthday of the Grand Duchess Olga. I gladly gave Mary permission to take the boys in our carriage. . . . They were gone so long that I grew anxious about them, but finally they arrived very tired, and poor Mary said she never wanted to go in such a crowd again. James had protected her as well as he was able, but she was glad to get home safely. The boys, however, enjoyed it immensely, as they saw all the Imperial family within arm's length, as they alighted from their pony chaises to enter the New Palace. . . . We were invited to go to the New Palace, and went immediately to the apartment occupied by his lamented daughter. On one side is the lovely picture painted by Buloff, so like her in life and health, though taken after death, as representing her spirit passing upwards to the palace above the blue sky. She wears her Imperial robes, with a crown on her head; at the back

of the crown is a halo of glory—the stars surround her as she passes through them. No wonder James should have thought this picture the most interesting of all the works of art around us."

In the autumn of 1846 Major Whistler "placed the boys, as boarders, at M. Jourdan's school. My dear boys almost daily exchange *billet-doux* with mother, since their absence of a week at a time from home. James reported everything 'first-rate,' even to brown bread and salt for breakfast, and greens for dinner, and both forbore to speak of homesickness, and welcome, indeed, were they on their first Saturday at home, when they opened the front door and called 'Mother, Mother!' as they rushed in all in a glow, and they looked almost handsome in their new round black cloth caps, set to one side of their cropped heads, and the tight school uniform of grey trousers and black jacket makes them appear taller and straighter; Jamie found the new suit too tight for his drawing lesson, so he sacrificed vanity to comfort, and was not diverted from his two hours' drawing by the other boys' frolics, which argues well for his determination to improve, as he promised his father. How I enjoyed having them back and listening to all their chat about their school—they seemed to enjoy their nice home tea. When it came time for them to go back, Willie broke down and told me all he had suffered from homesickness, and when I talked to my more manly James, I unfortunately said, 'You do not know what he feels.' Then Jamie's wounded love melted him into tears, as he said, 'Oh! mother, you think I don't miss being away from home!' He brushed away the shower with the back of his hand as if he was afraid of being seen weeping. Dear boys, may they never miss me as I miss them!"

Shortly after this, Mrs. Whistler's youngest son, John Bouttatz, born in the summer of 1845, died.

November 14 (1846). "Jamie was kept in until night last Saturday, and made to write a given portion of French over twenty-five times as a punishment for stopping to talk to a classmate after their recitation, instead of marching back to his seat according to order—poor fellow, it was rather severe when he had looked only for rewards during the week; as he had not had one mark of disapprobation in all that time, and was so much elated by his number of good balls for perfect recitations tha the forgot disobedience of orders is a capital offence

under military discipline. He lost his drawing lesson, and made us all unhappy at home. We tried to keep his dinner hot, but his appetite had forsaken him, although only having eaten a penny roll since breakfast—he dashed the tears of vexation from his eyes at losing his drawing lesson, but his cheerfulness was soon restored and we had our usual pleasant evening."

January 23 (1847). "It is three weeks this afternoon since the dear boys came home from school to spend the Russian Christmas and holidays, and it seems not probable that they shall return again to M. Jourdan's this winter. James was drooping from the close confinement, and for two days was confined to his bed. Then Willie was taken. They are quite recovered now, and skate almost daily on the Neva, and Jamie often crosses on the ice to the Academy of Fine Arts to spend an hour or two."

January 30 (1847). "Jamie was taken ill with a rheumatic attack soon after this, and I have had my hands full, for he has suffered much with pain and weariness, but he is gradually convalescing, and to-day he was able to walk across the floor; he has been allowed to amuse himself with his pencil, while I read to him; he has not taken a dose of medicine during the attack, but great care was necessary in his diet."

February 27 (1847). "Never shall I cease to record with deep gratitude dear Jamie's unmurmuring submission these last six weeks. He still cannot wear jacket or trousers, as the blistering still continues on his chest. What a blessing is such a contented temper as his, so grateful for every kindness, and rarely complains. He is now enjoying a huge volume of Hogarth's engravings, so famous in the Gallery of Artists. We put the immense book on the bed, and draw the great easy-chair close up, so that he can feast upon it without fatigue. He said, while so engaged yesterday, 'Oh, how I wish I were well; I want so to show these engravings to my drawing-master; it is not everyone who has a chance of seeing Hogarth's own engravings of his originals,' and then added, in his own happy way, 'and if I had not been ill, mother, perhaps no one would have thought of showing them to me.'"

From this time until his death, Whistler maintained that Hogarth was the greatest English artist, and never lost an opportunity of saying

so. His long illness in 1847 is therefore memorable as the beginning of his love of Hogarth and also as a proof of his early appreciation of great art. Curiously, in his mother's diary there is no mention of the Hermitage, nor in his talks with us did he ever refer to it and to the pictures there by Velasquez, the artist he later grew to admire so enormously.

March 23 (1847). "After many postponements, the Emperor finally inspected the Railroad . . . and many of the Court were invited. The day after his visit . . . the Court held a *levée*, my husband was invited; when he arrived was summoned to a private audience in an inner apartment; the Emperor met him with marked kindness, kissed him on each side his face, and hung an ornament suspended by a scarlet ribbon around his neck, saying the Emperor thus conferred upon him the Order of St. Anne. Whistler, as such honours are new to Republicans, was somewhat abashed, but when he returned with the Court to the large circle in the outer room, he was congratulated by the officers generally."

It is said that when Major Whistler was asked to wear the Russian uniform he refused. The decoration he could not decline.

Whistler told us that the Emperor was most impressed with the way his father met every difficulty. When Major Whistler asked the Czar how the line should be built, showing him the map of the country between St. Petersburg and Moscow, the Czar, as everybody now knows, took a ruler, drew a straight line from one city to the other, and the railroad follows that ruled line. But everybody does not know that when the rolling stock was ready it was found to have been made of a different gauge from the rails. The people who supplied it demanded to be paid. Major Whistler not only refused, but burnt it, and took the responsibility.

Mrs. Whistler and the three children spent the summer of 1847 in England, where Major Whistler joined them. They visited their relations, and before their return Deborah was married. She had met Seymour Haden, a young surgeon, while staying with friends, the Chapmans, at Preston.

October 10 (1847). "Deborah's wedding day. Bright and pleasant. James the only groomsman, and very proud of the honour."

The next summer (1848) Mrs. Whistler went back to England.

Jamie had had another of his bad attacks of rheumatic fever, cholera broke out in St. Petersburg; "at its very name," she wrote, "my heart failed me." On July 6 she left for London with her boys. Jamie was better, and anxious to make a portrait of a young Hindu aboard.

July 22 (1848). "*Shanklin, Isle of Wight.* This is Willie's twelfth birthday and has been devoted to his pleasure; poor Jamie was envious that he could not bathe with us in the beautiful summer sea, for the doctors think the bracing air as much as he can bear; we three had a seaside ramble and then returned to rest at our cottage. I plied the needle, while my boys amused themselves, Willie in making wax flowers and Jemmie in drawing."

Monday [*no date*]. "This day being especially fine, Mrs. P. took the boys on a pedestrian excursion along the shore to Culver Cliffs. In the hope that Jamie might finish his sketch of Cook's Castle, we started the next day after an early dinner, taking a donkey with us for fear of fatigue for James or Deborah. . . . We availed ourselves of a lovely bright morning to take a drive, said to be the most charming in England, along the south coast of the Isle as far as 'Black Gang Chine,' where we alighted at the inn. Jamie flew off like a sea-fowl, his sketch-book in hand, and when I finally found him, he was seated on the red sandy beach, down, down, down, where it was with difficulty Willie and I followed him. He was attempting the sketch of the waterfall and cavern up the side of the precipice; he came back later, glowing with the exercise of climbing, with sketch-book in hand, and laughing at being 'Jacky last,' as we were all assembled for our drive back."

James did not return with Mrs. Whistler. It was feared his health would not stand another Russian winter. He stayed with the Hadens at 62 Sloane Street, and studied with a clergyman who had one other pupil. It was then that Boxall, commissioned by Major Whistler, painted his portrait, "when he was fourteen years old," Mrs. Thynne, his niece, says.

Mr. Alan S. Cole, C.B., recalls that "Whistler, as early as 1849, was staying with the Hadens in Sloane Street, and went to one or two children's parties given by the old Dilkes. To these also went my elder sisters and Miss Thackeray and so met Jimmy. Seymour Haden was our family doctor—with whose family ours was intimate—

very much on account of the early relations between my father, his brothers, and Seymour Haden, dating from schooldays at Christ's Hospital."

Major Whistler, through the summer of 1848, continued his work, though cholera raged. In November he was attacked. He recovered, but his health was shaken: he overtaxed his strength, and on April 9, 1849, he died: the immediate cause heart trouble, which his son inherited. He had been employed or consulted also in the building of the iron roof of the Riding House at St. Petersburg and the iron bridge over the Neva, in the improvement of the Dvina at Archangel, and the fortifications, the arsenal, and the docks at Cronstadt. He was buried in Evergreen Cemetery, Stonington, with three of his sons, and a monument was erected to his memory by his fellow officers in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn.

The Emperor suggested, Whistler told us, that the boys should be educated in the school for Court pages. But Mrs. Whistler determined to take them home, and the Emperor sent her in his State barge to the Baltic. She went to the Hadens, where she found James grown tall and strong. In London they forgot for a moment their sorrow in their visit to the Royal Academy (1849), in Trafalgar Square, where Boxall's portrait of James was exhibited. A short visit to Preston followed, the two boys carried off by "kind Aunt Alicia" to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and then they met in Liverpool. Economy made Mrs. Whistler hesitate between steamer and sailing-packet, but, by the advice of George Whistler, she took the steamer *America*, July 29, 1849, for New York, where they arrived on August 9, at once going by boat to Stonington.

CHAPTER III: SCHOOLDAYS IN POMFRET. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FORTY-NINE TO EIGHTEEN FIFTY-ONE.

"The boys were brought up like little princes until their father's death, which changed everything," Miss Emma W. Palmer writes us. Major Whistler's salary was large, so were his expenses; we have never heard there was a pension. He left his family comparatively poor—fifteen hundred dollars a year.

Mrs. Whistler would have preferred to stay at Stonington, but for her two sons' sake she went to Pomfret, Connecticut, where there was a good school, Christ Church Hall. The principal was Rev. Dr. Roswell Park, a West Point engineer before he became parson and school teacher. At Pomfret Mrs. Whistler made herself a home. She could only afford part of an old farmhouse, and she felt keenly the discomfort for her boys. Yet she kept up the old discipline. On Christmas Day she wrote to her mother that they had been busy all morning bringing in wood and listing draughty doors, though she allowed them to lighten their task by hanging up evergreens and to sweeten it with "Stuart's Candy." After a snowstorm, they had, like other boys, to shovel paths, and all the while they had to study. "Jimmie was still an excitable spirit with little perseverance," she wrote; however, she would not faint but labour, and "I urged them on daily, and could see already their exertions to overcome habits of indolence." The Bible was read and the two boys were made to recite a verse every morning before breakfast. Miss Palmer, their schoolmate, during the winter of 1850, remembers that Mrs. Whistler "was very strict with them," and describes Whistler at this period as "tall and slight, with a pensive, delicate face, shaded by soft brown curls, one lock of which fell over his forehead. . . . He had a somewhat foreign appearance and manner, which, aided by his natural abilities, made him very charming even at that age. . . . He was one of the sweetest, loveliest boys I ever met, and was a great favourite."

The deepest impression he left at Pomfret was as a draughtsman. He made caricatures and illustrations to the books he read, portraits of his friends, and landscapes. Many of his sketches have been preserved. The late Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, also one of his schoolmates, describes him as "a man as fascinating as he was great, with a charm which from the very beginning everyone who knew him recognised." Whistler told us that he used to walk to school with her, carrying her books and basket, and she wrote us:

"He was very attentive and kind; full of fun in those days. The master of the school—Rev. Dr. Roswell Park—was one of the stiffest and most precise of clergymen, and dressed the part. One day Whistler came to school with a high, stiff collar and a tie precisely copied from Dr. Park's. Of course, the schoolroom was full of suppressed laughter.

The reverend gentleman was very angry, but he could hardly take open notice of an offence of that sort. So he bottled up his wrath, but when Jimmy—as we used to call him in those schooldays—gave him some trifling cause of offence, the Rev. Dr. went for him with a ferrule. The school was in two divisions—the girls sitting on one side of the large hall, and the boys on the other. Jimmy, pursued by the Dr. and the ferrule, went round back of the girls' row, and threw himself down on the floor, and the Dr. followed him and whacked him, more, I think, to Jimmy's amusement than to his discomfort."

Mrs. Moulton had further recollections of the maps he drew, which "were at once the pride and the envy of all the rest of us—they were so perfect, so delicate, so exquisitely dainty in workmanship."

The work done at Pomfret by Whistler which we have seen does not strike us as remarkable. It has its historic importance, but shows no greater evidence of genius than the early work of any great artist.

CHAPTER IV: WEST POINT. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN FIFTY-FOUR.

Though Whistler's mother was proud of his drawing, she did not see in art a career for him. She thought he had inherited a profession more distinguished. Many Whistlers and McNeills had been soldiers. West Point had made of them men—Americans. West Point must do the same for him. Through the influence of George Whistler with Daniel Webster, he was appointed cadet At Large by President Fillmore, and on July 1, 1851, after two years at Pomfret school, within ten days of his seventeenth birthday, he entered the United States Military Academy, West Point, where Colonel Robert E. Lee was Commandant. Whistler was not made for the army any more than Giotto for Tuscan pastures, or Corot for a Paris bonnet shop. It was inevitable that he should fail. Yet his three years at West Point were an experience he would not have missed.

The record sent to us from West Point by Colonel C. W. Larned is: "He entered July 1, 1851, under the name of James A. Whistler; aged sixteen years and eleven months. He was appointed At Large. . . . At the end of his second year, in 1853, he was absent with leave

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ETCHING. G. 51

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STREET AT SAVERNE

ETCHING. G. 19

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on account of ill-health. On June 16, 1854, he was discharged from the Academy for deficiency in chemistry. At that time he stood at the head of his class in drawing and No. 39 in philosophy, the total number in the class being 43."

The Professor of Drawing was Robert W. Weir. Mr. J. Alden Weir, his son, remembers, "as a boy, my father showing me his work, which at that time hung in what was known as the Gallery of the Drawing Academy. There were about ten works by him framed. From the start he showed evidences of a talent which later proved to be unique in those fine and rare qualities hard to be understood by the majority."

Brigadier-General Alexander S. Webb, one of Whistler's classmates, says: "In the art class one day, while Whistler was busy over an India-ink drawing of a French peasant girl, Weir walked, as usual, from desk to desk, examining the pupil's work. After looking over Whistler's shoulder he stepped back to his own desk, filled his brush with India-ink [General Webb says he can see him now, rubbing the colour on the slab], and approached Whistler with a view to correcting some of the lines in the latter's drawing. When Whistler saw him coming, he raised his hands as if to ward off the strokes of his brush, and called out, 'Oh, don't, sir, don't! You'll spoil it!'"

Mr. William M. Chase told the story to Whistler and asked if there was any truth in it. "Well, you know he would have!" said Whistler.

Colonel Larned writes us: "I have here two drawings made by Whistler in his course of instruction in drawing, one of which is a water-colour copy of a coloured print, without special merit, and much touched up by Professor Weir, as was his wont; another, a pen-and-ink copy also of a colour print, quite brilliant and masterful in execution, which I presented to the officers' mess. The colour sketch bears the ear-marks all over it of Weir's retouching. It was his habit to touch up all water-colours of the cadets for the examination exhibition, and I don't believe Whistler at that time had any such facility in colour work as is indicated in this drawing. With my knowledge of my predecessor's practice, which we instructors follow to the best of our ability, I have always been suspicious of its integrity. At the same time Whistler was head in drawing, and it may be that Weir forbore in his case. The pen-and-ink, however, must have been his

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own interpretation of a colour lithograph, and shows such facility that it makes me hesitate.

"Whistler did another water-colour of a monk seated at a table by a window writing. This is also a copy of an old print which was used by Weir through successive classes. I think it was —— who saw the thing and wrote a lot of tommy-rot and hi-falutin about it and Whistler's satiric genius, and his introduction in the monk's face of that of his room-mate, assuming it to have been an original production. As a matter of fact I have copies of the same thing by cadets in the gallery, all touched up by Weir, and I fancy about as good as Whistler's."

Of these West Point drawings, copies probably of lithographs by Nash or Haghe, only the pen drawing gives any promise. The water-colour is worthless. The pen drawing has in it the beginning of the handling of his etchings. Five drawings, four of *An Hour in the Life of a Cadet* in pen-and-ink, and one of *An Encampment* in wash, have lately been found at West Point. The cadet drawings are far the best of his early work that we have seen. The *Century Magazine* published (March 1910) a lithograph, called *The Song of the Graduates*, said to be by Whistler. It is evident, however, that if Whistler did make the sketch, it was re-drawn by a professional lithographer at Sarony's, who printed it. The *Century* also published (September 1910) a wood-engraving of some class function for which he is given the credit as draughtsman and engraver. But the work is that of a professional wood-engraver and could not have been done by Whistler at any period of his life. The attribution of these published prints to him is altogether unjustified.

Of his other studies there is little to record. This is Colonel Larned's account of his failure in chemistry: "Whistler said: 'Had silicon been a gas, I would have been a major-general.' He was called up for examination in chemistry . . . and given silicon to discuss. He began: 'I am required to discuss the subject of silicon. Silicon is a gas.' 'That will do, Mr. Whistler,' and he retired quickly to private life."

According to Colonel Larned, Whistler then appealed to General Lee, but Lee answered, "I can only regret that one so capable of doing well should so have neglected himself, and must suffer the penalty."

Another story is of an examination in history. "What!" said his examiner, "you do not know the date of the battle of Buena Vista? Suppose you were to go out to dinner, and the company began to talk of the Mexican War, and you, a West Point man, were asked the date of the battle, what would you do?" "Do," said Whistler, "why, I should refuse to associate with people who could talk of such things at dinner!"

Whistler's horsemanship was little better. It was not unusual, General Webb says, for him at cavalry drill to go sliding over his horse's head. Then Major Sackett, the commander, would call out: "Mr. Whistler, aren't you a little ahead of the squad?" Whistler said to us Major Sackett's remark was: "Mr. Whistler, I am pleased to see you for once at the head of your class!" "But I did it gracefully," he insisted. There are traditions of his fall when trotting in his first mounted drill, and the astonishment of the dragoon who ran to carry him off to hospital, when he rose unhurt with the complaint that he didn't "see how any man could keep a horse for amusement." Once Whistler had to ride a horse called "Quaker." "Dragoon, what horse is this?" "'Quaker,'" said the soldier. "Well, he's no friend!" said Whistler.

His observance of the regulations was often as bad as his horsemanship, and his excuses worse. General Ruggles, a classmate, tells of the discovery of a pair of boots which were against the regulations, and of his writing a long explanation, winding up with the argument that, as this demerit added but a little to the whole number, "what boots it?"

General Langdon writes us: "The widow of a Colonel Thompson occupied a set of officer's quarters at the 'Point,' and, to eke out her pension, was allowed to take ten or twelve cadets to board. Very soon after his admission to the Academy Whistler discovered that the fare of the cadets was not of his taste, and he applied for permission to take his meals at Mrs. Thompson's. Now, though her house was in the row of officers' quarters and the nearest to the cadet barracks, it was 'off cadet limits,' except for the boarders at meals. One evening, long after supper, Whistler was discovered by Mrs. Thompson, leaning over her fence, talking with her pretty French maid. Mrs. Thompson inquired his business there. Whistler replied: 'I am

looking for my cat!' It was well known that cadets were not allowed to keep cats, dogs, or other beasts. The old lady nearly had a fit. As soon as she could recover she gasped out: 'Young man, go 'way!' and sent her pretty maid indoors. Of course, Whistler took no more meals at Mrs. Thompson's, but in the mess hall, where the fare in those days was far from inviting."

Whistler told Sir Rennell Rodd another story: "The cadets were out early one morning, engaged in surveying. It was cold and raw, and Jimmy, finding a line of deep ditch through which he could make a retiring movement, got back into college and his warm quarters unperceived. By accident a roll-call was held that morning. Cadet Whistler not being present, a report was drawn up and his name was sent to the commanding officer as absent from parade without the knowledge or permission of his instructor. The report was shown him, and he said to the instructor: 'Have I your permission to speak?' 'Speak on, Cadet Whistler.' 'You have reported me, sir, for being absent from parade without the knowledge or permission of my instructor. Well, now, if I was absent without your knowledge or permission, how did you know I was absent?' They got into terms after that, and the incident closed."

The stories of Whistler at West Point might be multiplied. Many have been published. The few we tell show that at the Military Academy, as everywhere, he left his mark. We have a stronger proof in the letters written to us by officers who were his fellow cadets. It is half a century since they and Whistler were together, and, with one exception, they never saw him in later years, yet their memory of him is fresh. General D. McN. Gregg and General C. B. Comstock, his classmates, General Loomis L. Langdon, General Henry L. Abbott, General Oliver Otis Howard, General G. W. C. Lee, in the class before his, have sent us their recollections. These distinguished officers agree in their affection and their appreciation of him. He was "a vivacious and likeable little fellow," General Comstock says, and we get a picture of him, short and slight, not over military in his bearing, somewhat foreign in appearance, near-sighted, and with thick, black curls that won him the name of "Curly." Others remember his wit, his pranks, his fondness for cooking and the excellence of his dishes; his excursions "after taps," for buckwheat cakes and oysters or ice-cream and

LA MÈRE GÉRARD

OIL

In the possession of William Heinemann, Esq.

(*See page* 39)

HEAD OF AN OLD MAN SMOKING

OIL

In the Musée du Luxembourg

(*See page* 52)

soda-water to Joe's, and, for heavier fare, to Benny Haven's a mile away, a serious offence; they remember his indifference to discipline, and the number of his demerits, which they excuse as "not indicating any moral obliquity," but due to such harmless faults as "lates," "absences," "clothing out of order"; most of all, they remember his drawings—his caricatures of the cadets, the Board of Visitors, the masters, his sketches scribbled over his text-books, his illustrations to Dickens, Dumas, Victor Hugo. General Langdon recalls a picture that he and Whistler painted together. Whistler gave these drawings away, and many have been preserved. Even the cover of a geometry book, on which he sketched and noted bets with General Webb, was kept by his room-mate, Frederick L. Childs—*Les Enfants*, Whistler called him.

Whistler looked back to West Point with equal affection. He failed, but West Point was the basis of his code of conduct. As a "West Point man" he met every emergency, and his bearing, his carriage, showed the influence of those days when he liked to look back to himself "very dandy in grey." For the discipline, the tradition, the tone of the Academy he never lost his respect. He knew what it could do in making men of boys. "From the moment we came," he said to us, "we were United States officers, not schoolboys, not college students. We were ruled, not by little school or college rules, but by our honour, by our deference to the unwritten law of tradition." He resented the least innovation that threatened the hold of this tradition over the cadets. "To take a cadet into court was destruction to the *morale* of West Point; it was such a disgrace to offend against the unwritten laws that the offender's career was ruined." In the most trivial matters he deplored deviation from the old standard. That was the reason of his indignation when he heard that cadets were playing football, and, worse, playing against college teams; to put themselves on the level of students "was beneath the dignity of officers of the United States." During our war with Spain, and the Boers' struggle in South Africa, there was not an event, not a rumour, that he did not refer to West Point and its code. The Spanish War, though, "no doubt, we should never have gone into it, was the most wonderful, the most beautiful war since Louis XIV. Never in modern times has there been such a war; it was conducted on correct West

Point principles, with the most perfect courtesy and dignity on both sides, and the greatest chivalry." When he came back to London from Corsica in 1901, and was telling us of the people and the way they clung to old custom and ceremonial, he said that he had found "the Roman tradition almost as fine as the West Point tradition," and this was a concession. We never knew him to show the least desire to return to Lowell or Stonington, to Pomfret or Washington, but he said, "If I ever make the journey to America, I will go straight to Baltimore, then to West Point, and then sail for England again." One evening we asked him to meet an officer just from West Point. His interest could not have been keener, had he left the Academy the day before. He wanted to know about everything—the buildings, the life, the discipline. He deplored every innovation, always, above all, football: West Point to him was in danger when cadets could stoop to dispute "with college students for a dirty ball kicked round a muddy field." This was the shadow thrown over his pleasure when he heard of the pride the Academy took in claiming him, of his reputation there, of his drawings hanging in places of honour. It was the military side of the Academy, however, that stirred him to enthusiasm. His face fell when, asking the officer, who, like Major Whistler, was in the artillery, "Professor of Tactics, I suppose?" the officer answered, "No, of French." He showed his affection for the Military Academy by sending to the library a copy of *Whistler* v. *Ruskin: Art and Art Critics*, with autograph notes and on the title-page the inscription: "From an old cadet whose pride it is to remember his West Point days." This is signed with the butterfly, and newspaper cuttings about the trial are pasted at the end of the book. The authorities at West Point have honoured him by placing a memorial tablet, one of St. Gaudens' last works, in the library of the Academy, and at the suggestion of the late Major Zalinski, a number of American artists have given a series of works to the Academy in his honour. In this collection Whistler alone is not represented, we believe.

But it needs more than respect and love for the Military Academy to make a soldier, and Whistler, like Poe before him, was an alien at West Point. It was no question of the number of his demerits, or of his ignorance of chemistry and history; he had something else to do in life.

CHAPTER V: THE COAST SURVEY. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-FOUR AND EIGHTEEN FIFTY-FIVE.

When Whistler left West Point in 1854 he had not only to face the disappointment of his mother, but to find another career. The plan now was to apprentice him to Mr. Winans, in the locomotive works at Baltimore.

Mr. Frederick B. Miles writes us: "It was in 1854 that I first met Whistler in Baltimore, after he left West Point, at the house of Thomas Winans, who had returned from Russia. I was apprenticed to the loco. works of old Mr. Ross Winans, Thomas Winan's father. His elder brother, George Whistler, was a friend of my family; had been superintendent of the New York and New Haven Railroad, and had married Miss Julia Winans, sister of Thomas Winans, then came into the loco. works as partner and superintendent. I was in the drawing-room under him.

"Whistler was staying with Tom Winans or his brother, George Whistler. They were perplexed at his 'flightiness'—wanted him to enter the loco. works. His younger brother William was an apprentice along with me. But Jem never really worked. He spent much of his several short stays and two long ones in Baltimore loitering about the drawing-office and shops, and at my drawing-desk in Tom Winans' house. We all had boards with paper, carefully stretched, which Jem would cover with sketches, to our great disgust, obliging us to stretch fresh ones, but we loved him all the same. He would also ruin all our best pencils, sketching not only on the paper, but also on the smoothly finished wooden backs of the drawing-boards, which, I think, he preferred to the paper side. We kept some of the sketches for a long time. I had a beauty—a cavalier in a dungeon cell, with one small window high up. In all his work at that time he was very Rembrandtesque, but, of course, only amateurish. Nevertheless he was studying and working out effects."

Whistler saw enough of the locomotive works to know that he did not want to be an apprentice, and it was not long before he left Baltimore for Washington. To us he spoke as if he had gone to Washington straight from West Point. He was with us on the evening of September 15, 1900, after the news had come from the Transvaal of President

Kruger's flight, and our talking of it led him back to West Point, and so to the story of his days in the service of the Government. He followed the Boer War with intense interest :

" The Boers are as fine as the Southerners—their fighting would be no discredit to West Point," and he was indignant with us for looking upon Kruger's flight as diplomatically a blunder. " Diplomatically it was right, you know, the one thing Kruger should have done, just as, in that other amazing campaign, flight had been the one thing for Jefferson Davis, a Southern gentleman who had the code. I shall always remember the courtesy shown me by Jefferson Davis, through whom I got my appointment in the Coast Survey.

" It was after my little difference with the Professor of Chemistry at West Point. The Professor would not agree with me that silicon was a gas, but declared it was a metal ; and as we could come to no agreement in the matter, it was suggested—all in the most courteous and correct West Point way—that perhaps I had better leave the Academy. Well, you know, it was not a moment for the return of the prodigal to his family or for any slaying of fatted calves. I had to work, and I went to Washington. There I called at once on Jefferson Davis, who was Secretary of War—a West Point man like myself. He was most charming, and I—well, from my Russian cradle, I had an idea of things, and the interview was in every way correct, conducted on both sides with the utmost dignity and elegance. I explained my unfortunate difference with the Professor of Chemistry—represented that the question was one of no vital importance, while on all really important questions I had carried off more than the necessary marks. My explanation made, I suggested that I should be reinstated at West Point, in which case, as far as I was concerned, silicon should remain a metal. The Secretary, courteous to the end, promised to consider the matter, and named a day for a second interview.

" Before I went back to the Secretary of War, I called on the Secretary of the Navy, also a Southerner, James C. Dobbin, of South Carolina, suggesting that I should have an appointment in the Navy. The Secretary objected that I was too young. In the confidence of youth, I said age should be no objection ; I ' could be entered at the Naval Academy, and the three years at West Point could count at Annapolis.' The Secretary was interested, for he, too, had a sense of

things. He regretted, with gravity, the impossibility. But something impressed him; for, later, he reserved one of six appointments he had to make in the marines and offered it to me. In the meantime, I had returned to the Secretary of War, who had decided that it was impossible to meet my wishes in the matter of West Point; West Point discipline had to be observed, and if one cadet were reinstated, a dozen others who had tumbled out after me would have to be reinstated too. But if I would call on Captain Benham, of the Coast Survey, a post might be waiting for me there."

Captain Benham was a friend of his father, and Whistler was engaged in the drawing division of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, at the salary of a dollar and a half a day. This appointment he received on November 7, 1854, six months after he had left West Point. There was nothing to appeal to him in the routine of the office. What he had to do he did, but with no enthusiasm.

"I was apt to be late, I was so busy socially. I lived in a small room, but it was amazing how I was asked and went everywhere—to balls, to the Legations, to all that was going on. Labouchere, an *attaché* at the British Legation, has never ceased to talk of me, so gay, and, when I had not a dress suit, pinning up the tails of my frock-coat, and turning it into a dress-coat for the occasion. Shocking!"

Mr. Labouchere has told this story in a letter to us: "I did know Whistler very well in America about fifty years ago. But he was then a young man at Washington, who—if I remember rightly—had not been able to pass his examination at West Point and had given no indication of his future fame. He was rather hard up, I take it, for I remember that he pinned back the skirt of a frock-coat to make it pass as a dress-coat at evening parties. Washington was then a small place compared with what it is now, where everybody—so to say—knew everybody, and the social parties were of a simple character. This is really all that I remember of Whistler at that time, except that he was thought witty and paradoxically amusing!"

But long before something in his dress drew attention to him. Though he was never seen in the high-standing collar and silk hat of the time, some remember him in a Scotch cap and a plaid shawl thrown over his shoulder, then the fashion; others recall a slouch hat and cloak, his coat, unbuttoned, showing his waistcoat; while

traditions of his social charm come from every side. Adjutant-General Breck is responsible for the story of Whistler having invited the Russian Minister—others say the *Chargé d'Affaires*—Edward de Stoeckl, to dine with him, carrying the Minister off in his own carriage, doing the marketing by the way, and cooking the dinner before his guest in the room where he lived. And it has been said that never was the Minister entertained by so brilliant a host while in Washington.

Mr. John Ross Key, a fellow draughtsman in the Coast Survey, says that this room was in a house in Thirteenth Street, near Pennsylvania Avenue, and that Whistler usually dined in a restaurant close by, kept by a Mr. and Mrs. A. Gautier. According to the late A. Lindenkohl, another fellow draughtsman, Whistler also lived for a while in a house at the north-east corner of E. and Twelfth Streets, a two-storey brick building which has lately been pulled down. He occupied a plainly but comfortably furnished room, for which he paid ten dollars a month. The office records show that he worked six and one-half days in January, and five and three-fourths in February. He usually arrived late, but, he would say, it was not his fault. "I was not too late; the office opened too early." Lindenkohl described an effort to reform him:

"Captain Benham took occasion to tell me that he felt great interest in the young man, not only on account of his talents, but also on account of his father, and he told me that he would be highly pleased if I could induce Whistler to be more regular in his attendance. 'Call at his lodgings on your way to the office,' he said, 'and see if you can't bring him along.'

"Accordingly, one morning, I called at Whistler's lodgings at half-past eight. No doubt he felt somewhat astonished, but received me with the greatest *bonhomie*, invited me to make myself at home, and promised to make all possible haste to comply with my wishes. Nevertheless he proceeded with the greatest deliberation to rise from his couch and put himself into shape for the street and prepare his breakfast, which consisted of a cup of strong coffee brewed in a steam-tight French machine, then a novelty, and also insisted upon treating me with a cup. We made no extra haste on our way to the office, which we reached about half-past ten—an hour and a half after time. I did not repeat the experiment."

Lindenkohl said that Whistler spoke of Paris with enthusiasm, that he sketched sometimes from the office windows, and made studies of people, taking the greatest interest in the arrangement and folds of their clothes. Whistler showed him "several examples done with the brush in sepia, in old French or Spanish styles," whatever this may mean. Mr. Key describes Whistler as "painfully near-sighted," and always sketching, even on the walls as he went downstairs. Though in Washington only a few months, he left the impression of his indifference to work except in the one form in which work interested him—his art.

If nothing else were known of this period, it would be memorable for the technical instruction he received in the Coast Survey. His work was the drawing and etching of Government topographical plans and maps, which have to be made with the utmost accuracy and sharpness of line. His training, therefore, was in the hardest and most perfect school of etching in the world, a fact never until now pointed out. The work was dull, mechanical, and he sometimes relieved the dullness by filling empty spaces on the plates with sketches. Captain Benham told him plainly, Whistler said, that he was not there to spoil Government coppers, and ordered all the designs to be immediately erased. This was Whistler's account to us. But Mr. Key, in his *Recollections of Whistler*, published in the *Century Magazine* (April 1908) says that these sketches were confined to the experimental plate given to Whistler, as to all beginners, and he adds that he watched Whistler through the process of preparing and etching it.

Only two plates have been as yet, or probably ever will be, found in the office that can be attributed, wholly or in part, to Whistler: the *Coast Survey, No.* 1, and *Coast Survey No.* 2, *Anacapa Island*, first described in the *Catalogue of the Whistler Memorial Exhibition* in London, 1905. The *Coast Survey, No.* 1 is a plate giving two parallel views, one above the other, of the coast-line of a rocky shore, the lower showing a small town in a deep bay with, below them both to the extreme left, a profile map. Whistler was unable to confine himself to the Government requirements. In the lower design, chimneys are gaily smoking, and on the upper part of the plate several figures, obviously reminiscent of prints and drawings, are sketched: an old peasant woman; a man in a tall Italian hat, or, Mr. Key says, Whistler

himself as a Spanish hidalgo; another in a Sicilian bonnet; a mother and child in an oval, meant for Mrs. Partington and Ike, as Mr. Key remembers; a battered French soldier; a bearded monk in a cowl. The drawing is schoolboy-like, though it shows certain observation, but the biting is remarkable. The little figures are bitten as well and in the same way as *La Vieille aux Loques*, etched three or four years afterwards; to look at them is to know that Whistler was a consummate etcher technically before he left the Coast Survey. There is no advance in the biting of the French series. So astonishing is this mastery that, if the technique in some of the French plates were not similar, one would be tempted to doubt whether Whistler etched those little figures in Washington, especially as the plate is unsigned. The plate escaped by chance. Mr. Key, to whom it was given to clean off and use again, asked to keep it, and it was sold to him for the price of old copper. It is still in existence.

The second plate, *Anacapa Island*, is signed with several names. Whistler etched the view of the eastern extremity of the island, for many lines on the rocky shore resemble the work in the French series, and also the two flights of birds which, though they enliven the design, have no topographical value. This plate was finished and published in the Report of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, 1855. There is said to be a third plate, a chart of the Delaware River, but we have never seen it and can find out nothing about it.

One other record of Whistler at the Coast Survey remains, but of a different kind. He liked to tell the story. Captain Benham used to come and look through the small magnifying glass each draughtsman in this department had to work with. One day, Whistler etched a little devil on the glass, and Captain Benham looked through it at the plate. Whistler described himself to us, lying full length on a sort of mattress or trestle, so as not to touch the copper. But he saw Captain Benham give a jump. The captain said nothing. He pocketed the glass, and that was all Whistler heard of it until many years afterwards, when, one day, an old gentleman appeared at his studio in Paris, and by way of introduction took from his watch-chain a tiny magnifying glass, and asked Whistler to look through it—" and," he said, " well—we recognised each other perfectly."

Captain Benham is dead, but his son, Major H. H. Benham, writes

us: "I have heard my father tell the story. He was very fond of Whistler, and thought most highly of his great ability—or rather genius, I should say."

Genius like Whistler's served him as little at the Coast Survey as at West Point. He resigned in February 1855. His brother, George Whistler, and Mr. Winans tried again to make him enter the locomotive works in Baltimore. He was twenty-one, old enough to insist upon what he wanted, and what he wanted was to study art. Already at St. Petersburg his ability had struck his mother's friends. At Pomfret and West Point he owed to his drawing whatever distinction he had attained. And there had been things done outside of school and Academy and office work, he told us—"portraits of my cousin Annie Denny and of Tom Winans, and many paintings at Stonington that Stonington people remembered so well they looked me up in Paris afterwards. Indeed, all the while, ever since my Russian days, there had been always the thought of art, and when at last I told the family that I was going to Paris, they said nothing. There was no difficulty. They just got me a ticket. I was to have three hundred and fifty dollars (seventy pounds) a year, and my stepbrother, George Whistler, who was one of my guardians, sent it to me after that every quarter."

CHAPTER VI: STUDENT DAYS IN THE LATIN QUARTER. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-FIVE TO EIGHTEEN FIFTY-NINE.

Whistler arrived in Paris in the summer of 1855. There he fell among friends. The American Legation was open to the son of Major Whistler. It was the year of the first International Exhibition, and Sir Henry Cole, the British Commissioner, the Thackerays, and the Hadens were there. Lady Ritchie (Miss Thackeray) writes:

"I wish I had a great deal more to tell you about Whistler. I always enjoyed talking to him when we were both hobbledehoys at Paris; he used to ask me to dance, and rather to my disappointment perhaps, for, much as I liked talking to him, I preferred dancing, we used to stand out while the rest of the party polkaed and waltzed by.

There was a certain definite authority in the things he said, even as a boy. I can't remember what they were, but I somehow realised that what he said mattered. When I heard afterwards of his fanciful freaks and quirks, I could not fit them in with my impression of the wise young oracle of my own age."

George Whistler wanted him to go to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but there is no record of his having been admitted. He went instead to the studio Gleyre inherited from Delaroche and handed on to Gérôme, which drew to it all the students who did not crowd to Couture and Ary Scheffer. It was not extraordinary, as some have said, that Whistler should have gone there; it would have been extraordinary had he stayed away. He arrived in Paris when Courbet, slighted at the International, was defying convention with his first show and his first "Manifesto," and many of the younger men were throwing over Romanticism for Realism. Whistler found himself more in sympathy with the followers of Courbet than with Gleyre's pupils, and he became so intimate with the group, among whom were Fantin and Degas, who studied under Lecocq de Boisbaudran, that it is sometimes thought he must have worked in that school. But on his arrival in Paris the young American had heard neither of Lecocq de Boisbaudran nor Courbet, and Gleyre was the popular teacher. Fantin-Latour and M. Duret both have said that they seldom heard Whistler speak of Gleyre's. When we asked him about it, he only recalled the dignified principles upon which it was conducted. There was not even the case of the *nouveau*. "If a man was a decent fellow, and would sing his song, and take a little chaff, he had no trouble." Whistler could remember only one disagreeable incident, in connection, not with a *nouveau*, but an unpopular student, who had been there some time and put on airs. One morning, Whistler told us, he came to the studio late, "and there were all the students working away very hard, the unpopular one among them, and there, at the end of the room, on the model's stand was an enormous catafalque, the unpopular one's name on it in big letters. And no one said a word. But that killed him. He was never again seen in the place."

Gleyre was by no means colourless as a teacher. He is remembered as the successor of David and the Classicists, but he held theories disquieting to academic minds. He taught that before a picture was

begun the colours should be arranged on the palette: in this way, he said, difficulties were overcome, for attention could be given solely to the drawing and modelling on canvas in colour. He taught also that ivory-black is the base of tone. Upon this preparation of the palette and this base of black—upon black, "the universal harmoniser" —Whistler founded his practice as painter, and as teacher when he visited the pupils of the *Académie Carmen.** As he has told us over and over again, his practice of a lifetime was derived from what he learned in the schools, and the master's methods he never abandoned. He only developed methods, misunderstood by those British prophets who have said he had but enough knowledge for his own needs.

Whistler spoke often to us of the men he met at Gleyre's: Poynter, Du Maurier, Lamont, Joseph Rowley. Leighton, in 1855, was studying at Couture's, developing his theory that "the best dodge is to be a devil of a clever fellow," and Mrs. Barrington says he made Whistler's acquaintance at the time and admired Whistler's etchings. But Whistler never recalled Leighton among his fellow students, though he spoke often with affection of Thomas Armstrong, who worked at Ary Scheffer's, and Aleco Ionides, not an art student but studying, no one seemed to know what or where. This is the group in Du Maurier's novel of Paris student life, *Trilby*. It is regrettable that Du Maurier cherished his petty spite against Whistler for twenty-five years and then printed it, and so wrecked what Whistler imagined a genuine friendship. Lamont, "the Laird," Rowley, the "Taffy," Aleco Ionides, "the Greek," and Thomas Armstrong are dead. Sir Edward J. Poynter remains, and also Mr. Luke Ionides, who was then often in Paris. He has given us his impressions of Whistler at the time:

"I first knew Jimmie Whistler in the month of August 1855. My younger brother was with a tutor, and had made friends with Jimmie. He was just twenty-one years old, full of life and go, always ready for fun, good-natured and good-tempered. He wore a peculiar straw hat, slightly on the side of his head—it had a low crown and a broad brim."

Whistler etched himself in this hat, which startled even artists and students, and became a legend in the Latin Quarter.

Mr. Rowley wrote us: "It was in 1857–8 that I knew Whistler,

* See Chapter XLIV.

and a most amusing and eccentric fellow he was, with his long, black, thick, curly hair, and large felt hat with a broad black ribbon round it. I remember on the wall of the *atelier* was a representation of him, I believe done by Du Maurier, a sketch of him, then a fainter one, and then merely a note of interrogation—very clever it was and very like the original. In those days he did not work hard, and I have a faint recollection of seeing a head painted by him in deep Rembrandtish tones which was thought very good indeed. He was always smoking cigarettes, which he made himself, and his droll sayings caused us no end of fun. I don't think he stayed long in any rooms. One day he told us he had taken a new one, and he was fitting it up *peu à peu*, and he had already got a *tabouret* and a chair. He told me tales of being invited to a reception at the American Minister's, but, as he had no dress suit to go in, he had to borrow Poynter's, who fitted him out, all except his boots. So he waited until the guests at the hotel had retired, when he went round the corridors, found what he wanted, and left them at the door on his return. It was more his manner and the clever way he told the tale that amused us. . . . I have his first twelve etchings, which he did in 1858. I never saw him after I left Paris that year. He was never a friend of mine, and it was only occasionally he came to see us at the *atelier* in Notre-Dame-des-Champs."

Whistler was intimate for awhile with Sir Edward J. Poynter, who scarcely seems to have understood him. To Poynter Whistler was the "Idle Apprentice." In his speech at the first Royal Academy Banquet (April 30, 1904) after Whistler's death, Poynter said: "Thrown very intimately in Whistler's company in early days, I knew him well when he was a student in Paris—that is, if he could be called a student, who, to my knowledge, during the two or three years when I was associated with him, devoted hardly as many weeks to study. His genius, however, found its way in spite of an excess of the natural indolence of disposition and love of pleasure of which a certain share has been the hereditary attribute of the art student." And this bit of insolence was the final tribute to his memory paid by British Official Art.

"Whistler was never wholly one of us," Armstrong told us. Whistler laughed at the Englishmen and their ways, above all at the

boxing and sparring matches in their studios; "he could not see why they didn't hire the *concierges* to do their fighting for them." But he understood the French, and they understood him. He could speak their language, he knew Murger by heart before he came to Paris, and there got to know him personally. Mr. Ionides says that once, on the *rive gauche*, they met Murger, and Whistler introduced him. Whistler delighted in the humour and picturesqueness of it, and was always quoting Murger. The Englishmen at Gleyre's were puzzled by him and his "no shirt friends" as he called one group of students. Every now and then they palled, even on him, and he would then tell the Englishmen that he "must give up the 'no shirt' set and begin to live cleanly." The end came when, during an absence from Paris, he lent them his room, luxurious from the student standpoint, with a tin bath and blue china. The "no shirt friends" could not change their habits with their surroundings. They made grogs in the bath; they never washed a plate, but when one side was dirty, ate off the other, and Whistler had not bargained to make his room the background for a new chapter in the *Vie de Bohème*. But this was later, after his adventures with them had been the gossip of the Quarter, and had confirmed the diligent English in their impressions of his idleness.

Among the French he made friends: Aubert, the first man he knew in Paris, a clerk in the Crédit Foncier; Fantin; Legros; Becquet, a musician; Henri Martin, son of the historian; Drouet, the sculptor; Henry Oulevey and Ernest Delannoy, painters. From Fantin we have notes made just before his death. Legros prefers to remember nothing, the friendship in his case ending many years ago. Drouet and Oulevey have told us almost as much as Whistler did of those days. When Oulevey first knew him, Whistler lived in a little hotel in the Rue St. Sulpice; then he moved to No. 1 Rue Bourbon-le-Chateau, near St. Germain-des-Prés; and then to No. 3 Rue Campagne-Première, where Drouet had a studio. When remittances ran out, he climbed six flights and shared a garret with Delannoy, the Ernest of the stories Whistler liked best to tell.

Mr. Miles writes us that he came to Paris in May 1857, with letters from Whistler's family and a draft for him: "At the Beaux-Arts he was not to be found, but I got his address. He had gone from

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that. I was in despair, but went to the Luxembourg, hoping to find some trace of him. In looking at a picture, I backed into an easel, heard a muttered damn behind me—and there was Whistler painting busily. He took me to his quarters in a little back street, up ten flights of stairs—a tiny room with a brick floor, a cot bed, a chair on which were a basin and pitcher—and that was all! We sat on the cot and talked as cheerfully as if in a palace—and he got the draft. 'Now,' said he, 'I shall move downstairs, and begin all over again—furnish my room comfortably. You see, I have just eaten my washstand and borrowed a little, hoping the draft would arrive. Have been living for some time on my wardrobe. You are just in time; don't know what I should have done, but it often happens this way! I first eat a wardrobe, and then move upstairs a flight or two, but seldom get so high as this before the draft comes!' How true this is I can't say, but it sounds probable and very like Whistler at that age—he was then about twenty-three or just twenty-four at most —May 1857. Then Whistler showed me Paris: I met some of his painter friends. I remember only Lambert (French) and Poynter (English)—now a great swell. Whistler didn't care much for Poynter at that time, but was witty and amusing, as usual. He dined with me at the best restaurant in Paris, which he had not done for a long time, and dined me, the next day, at a little *crémerie* to show what his usual fare had been, and, indeed, usually was when the time was approaching for the arrival of his allowance."

The restaurant to which Whistler and his friends usually went was Lalouette's, famous for a wonderful Burgundy at one franc the bottle, *le cachet vert*, ordered on great occasions, and more famous now for *Bibi Lalouette*, the subject of the etching, the child of the *patron*. Lalouette, like Siron at Barbizon, understood artists, and gave credit. Whistler, when he left Paris, owed Lalouette three thousand francs, every *sou* of which was paid, though it took a long time. To-day, unfortunately, such debts are not always discharged, and the charming system of other days exists no longer. They also dined at Madame Bachimont's in the Place de la Sorbonne, a *crémerie*, where Whistler once gave a dinner to the American Consul, and invited "*Canichon*," the daughter of the house, and bought her a new hat for the occasion—a tremendous sensation through the Quarter.

Drouet did not think that Whistler worked much. "He was every evening at the students' balls, and never got up until eleven or twelve in the morning, so where was the time for work?" Oulevey cannot remember his doing much at Gleyre's, or in the Luxembourg, or at the Louvre, but he was always drawing the people and the scenes of the Quarter. In the memory of both his work is overshadowed by his gaiety and his wit, his *blague*, his charm: "*tout à fait un homme à part*," is Oulevey's phrase, with "*un cœur de femme et une volonté d'homme*." Anything might be expected of him, and Drouet added that he was quick to resent an insult, always "*un petit rageur*." George Boughton, of a younger generation, when he came to the Quarter, found that all stories of larks were put down to Whistler. Mr. Luke Ionides writes:

"He was a great favourite among us all, and also among the *grisettes* we used to meet at the gardens where dancing went on. I remember one especially—they called her the *Tigresse*. She seemed madly in love with Jimmie and would not allow any other woman to talk to him when she was present. She sat to him several times with her curly hair down her back. She had a good voice, and I often thought she had suggested Trilby to Du Maurier."

She was the model for *Fumette*, Eloise, a little *modiste*, who knew Musset by heart and recited his verses to Whistler, and who one day in a rage tore up, not his etchings as Mr. Wedmore says, as often, wrongly, but his drawings. Whistler was living in the Rue St. Sulpice, and the day he came home and found the pieces piled high on the table he wept.

Another figure was *La Mère Gérard*. She was old and almost blind, was said to have written verse, and so come down in the world. She sold violets and matches at the gate of the Luxembourg. She was very paintable as she sat huddled up on the steps, and he got her to pose for him many times. She said she had a tapeworm, and if in the studio he asked her what she would eat or drink, her answer was, "*Du lait: il aime ça!*" They used to chaff him about her in the Quarter. Once, Lalouette invited all his clients to spend a day in the country, and Whistler accepted on condition that he could bring *La Mère Gérard*. She arrived, got up in style, sat at his side in the carriage in which they all drove off, and grew livelier as the day went

on. He painted her in the afternoon: the portrait a success, he promised it to her, but first took it back to the studio to finish. Then he fell ill and was sent to England. When he returned and saw the portrait again, he thought it too good for *La Mère Gérard*. He made a copy for the old lady, who saw the difference and was furious. Not long after he was walking past the Luxembourg with Lamont. The old woman, huddled on the steps, did not look up:

"*Eh bien, Madame Gérard, comment ça va?*" Lamont asked.

"*Assez bien, Monsieur, assez bien.*"

"*Et votre petit Américain?*"

To which she replied, not looking up, "*Lui? On dit qu'il a craqué! Encore une espèce de canaille de moins!*"

And Whistler laughed, and she knew him, as so many were to know him, by that laugh all his life.

For ages after, in the Quarter, he was called "*Espèce de canaille.*" And this is where Du Maurier got the story which he tells in *Trilby*—as he got all *Trilby*, in fact.

Another character in the Quarter of whom Whistler never tired of telling us was the Count de Montezuma, the delightful, inimitable, impossible, incredible Montezuma, not a student, not a painter, but one after Whistler's heart. He never had a *sou*, but always cheek enough to see him through. Whistler told us of him:

"This is the sort of thing he would do, and with an air—amazing! He started one day for Charenton on the steamboat, his pockets, as usual, empty, and he was there for as long as he could stay. The boat broke down, a *sergent de ville* came on board and ordered everybody off except the captain and his family, who happened to be with him. The Montezuma paid no attention. With arms crossed, he walked up and down, looking at no one. They waited, but he walked on, up and down, up and down, looking at no one. The *sergent de ville* repeated, '*Tout le monde à terre*' The Montezuma gave no sign. '*Et vous?*' the *sergent de ville* asked at last. '*Je suis de la famille!*' said the Montezuma. Opposite, staring at him, stood the captain with his wife and children. 'You see,' said the *sergent de ville*, 'the captain does not know you, he says you are not of the family. You must go.' '*Moi*,' and the Montezuma drew himself up proudly, '*Moi! je suis le bâtard!*'"

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER

ETCHING. G. 54

(*See page* 50)

SKETCHES OF THE JOURNEY TO ALSACE

PEN DRAWINGS

(*See page 44*)

Though he was frequently hard up, Whistler's income seemed princely to students who lived on nothing. When there was money in his pockets, Mr. Ionides says, he spent it royally on others. When his pockets were empty, he managed to refill them in a way that still amazes Oulevey, who told us of the night when, after the *café* where they had squandered their last *sous* on kirsch had closed, he and Lambert and Whistler adjourned to the Halles for supper, ordered the best, and ate it. Then he and Lambert stayed in the restaurant as hostages, while Whistler, at dawn, went off to find the money. He was back when they awoke, with three or four hundred francs in his pocket. He had been to see an American friend, he said, a painter: "And do you know, he had the bad manners to abuse the situation; he insisted on my looking at his pictures!"

There were times when everybody failed, even Mr. Lucas, George Whistler's friend, who was living in Paris and often came to his rescue. One summer day he pawned his coat when he was penniless and wanted an iced drink in a *buvette* across the way from his rooms in Rue Bourbon-le-Château. "What would you?" he said. "It is warm!" And for the next two or three days he went in shirt-sleeves. From Mr. Ionides we have heard how Whistler and Ernest Delannoy carried their straw mattresses to the nearest *Mont-de-Piété*, stumbling up three flights of stairs under them, and were refused an advance by the man at the window. "*C'est bien*," said Ernest with his grandest air. "*C'est bien. J'enverrai un commissionnaire!*" And they dropped the mattresses and walked out with difficulty, to go bedless home. Then there was a bootmaker to whom Whistler owed money, and who appeared with his bill, refusing to move unless he was paid. Whistler was courtesy itself, and, regretting his momentary embarrassment, begged the bootmaker to accept an engraving of Garibaldi, which he ventured to admire. The bootmaker was so charmed that he spoke no more of his bill, but took another order on the spot, and made new shoes into the bargain.

Many of the things told of Whistler he used to tell us of Ernest or the others. Ernest he said it was, though some say it was Whistler, who had a commission to copy in the Louvre, but no canvas, paints, or brushes, and not a *sou* to buy them with. However, he went to the gallery in the morning, the first to arrive, and his businesslike

air disarmed the *gardien* as he picked out an easel, a clean canvas, a palette, a brush or two, and a stick of charcoal. He wrote his name in large letters on the back of the canvas, and, when the others began to drop in, was too busy to see anything but his work. Presently there was a row. What! an easel missing, a canvas gone, brushes not to be found! The *gardien* bustled round. Everybody talked at once. Ernest looked up in a fury—shameful! Why should he be disturbed? What was it all about, anyhow? When he heard what had happened no one was louder. It had come to a pretty pass in the Louvre when you couldn't leave your belongings overnight without having them stolen! Things at last quieted down. Ernest finished his charcoal sketch, but his palette was bare. He stretched, jumped down from his high stool, strolled about, stopped to criticise here, to praise there, until he saw the colours he needed. The copy of the man who owned them ravished him. Astonishing! He stepped back to see it better. He advanced to look at the original, he grew excited, he gesticulated. The man, who had never been noticed before, grew excited too. Ernest talked the faster, gesticulated the more, until down came his thumb on the white or the blue or the red he wanted, and, with another sweep of his arm, a lump of it was on his palette. Farther on another supply offered. In the end, his palette well set, he went back to his easel, painting his copy. In some way he had supplied himself most plentifully with "turps," so that several times the picture was in danger of running off his canvas. At last it was finished and shown to his patron, who refused to have it. Whistler succeeded in selling it for Ernest to a dealer; and, "Do you know," he said, "I saw the picture years afterwards, and I think it was rather better than the original!" Oulevey's version is that Whistler helped himself to a box of colours, and, when discovered by its owner, was all innocence and surprise and apology; why, he supposed, of course, the boxes of colour were there for the benefit of students.

On another occasion, when Ernest, according to Whistler, had finished a large copy of Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana*, he and a friend, carrying it between them, started out to find a buyer. They crossed the Seine and offered it for five hundred francs to the big dealers on the right bank. Then they offered it for two hundred and fifty to the little dealers on the left. Then they went back and offered

it for one hundred and twenty-five. Then they came across and offered it for seventy-five. And back again for twenty-five, and over once more for ten. And they were crossing still again, to try to get rid of it for five, when, on the Pont des Arts, an idea: they lifted it; "*Un*," they said with a great swing, "*deux, trois, v'lan!*" and over it went into the river. There was a cry from the crowd, a rush to their side of the bridge, *sergents de ville* came running, omnibuses and cabs stopped on both banks, boats pushed out. It was an immense success, and they went home enchanted.

Ernest was Whistler's companion in the most wonderful adventure of all, the journey to Alsace when most of the French Set of etchings were made. Mr. Luke Ionides thinks it was in 1856. Fantin, who did not meet Whistler until 1858, remembered him just back from a journey to the Rhine, coming to the *Café Molière*, and showing the etchings made on the way. The French Set was published in November of that year, and if Whistler returned late in the autumn, the series could scarcely have appeared so soon. However, more important than the date is the fact that on his journey the *Liverdun*, the *Street at Saverne*, and *The Kitchen* were etched. He had made somehow two hundred and fifty francs, and he and Ernest started out for Nancy and Strasburg. Mr. Leon Dabo tells us that his father was a fellow student of Whistler's at Gleyre's and lived at Saverne, in Alsace, and that it was to see him Whistler went there. And from Mr. Dabo we have the story of excursions that Whistler and Ernest made with his father and several friends: one to the ruins of the castle near the village of Dabo, where it is said their signatures may still be seen on a rock of brown sandstone; another to Gross Geroldseck, and the sketches Whistler made there were afterwards presented to the Saverne Museum. It may be that a third excursion was to Pfalzburg, the birthplace of Erckmann and Chatrian, whom Whistler knew and possibly then met for the first time.

On the way back, at Cologne, one morning, Whistler and Ernest woke up to find their money gone. "What is to be done?" asked Ernest. "Order breakfast," said Whistler, which they did. There was no American Consul in the town, and after breakfast he wrote to everybody who might help him: to a fellow student he had asked to forward letters from Paris, to Seymour Haden in London, to Amster-

dam, where he thought letters might have been sent by mistake. Then they settled down to wait. Every day they would go to the post-office for letters, every day the official would say, "*Nichts! Nichts!*" until they got known to the town—Whistler with his long hair, Ernest with his brown hollands and straw hat fearfully out of season. The boys of the town would follow to the post-office, where, before they were at the door, the official was shaking his head and saying "*Nichts! Nichts!*" and all the crowd would yell, "*Nichts! Nichts!*" At last, to escape attention, they spent their days sitting on the ramparts.

At the end of a fortnight Whistler took his knapsack, put his plates in it, and carried it to the landlord, Herr Schmitz, whose daughter Little Gretchen he had etched—probably the plate called *Gretchen at Heidelberg*. He said he was penniless, but here were his copper-plates in his knapsack upon which he would set his seal. What was to be done with copper-plates? the landlord asked. They were to be kept with the greatest care as the work of a distinguished artist, Whistler answered, and when he was back in Paris, he would send the money to pay his bill, and then the landlord would send him the knapsack. Herr Schmitz hesitated, while Whistler and Ernest were in despair over the necessity of trusting masterpieces to him. The bargain was struck after much talk. The landlord gave them a last breakfast. Lina, the maid, slipped her last groschen into Whistler's hand, and the two set out to walk from Cologne to Paris with paper and pencils for baggage.

Whistler used to say that, had they been less young, they could have seen only the terror of that tramp. A portrait was the price of every plate of soup, every egg, every glass of milk on the road. The children who hooted them had to be drawn before a bit of bread was given to them. They slept in straw. And they walked until Whistler's light shoes got rid of most of their soles and bits of their uppers, and Ernest's hollands grew seedier and seedier. But they were young enough to laugh, and one day Whistler, seeing Ernest tramping ahead solemnly through the mud, the rain dripping from his straw hat, his linen coat a rag, shrieked with laughter as he limped. "*Que voulez-vous?*" Ernest said mournfully, "*les saisons m'ont toujours devancé!*" But it was the time of the autumn fairs, and, joining a lady who played the violin and a gentleman who played the harp, they gave enter-

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER IN THE BIG HAT

OIL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page 52*)

DROUET

ETCHING. G. 55

(*See page* 49)

tainments in every village, beating a big drum, announcing themselves as distinguished artists from Paris, offering to draw portraits, five francs the full length, three francs the half-length. At times they beat the big drum in vain, and Whistler was reduced to charging five sous apiece for his portraits, but he did his best, he said, and there was not a drawing to be ashamed of.

At last they came to Aix, where there was an American Consul who knew Major Whistler, and advanced fifty francs to his son. At Liége, poor, shivering, ragged Ernest got twenty from the French Consul, and the rest of the journey was made in comfort. On his return, Whistler's first appearance at the *Café Molière* was a triumph. They had thought him dead, and here he was, *le petit Américain!* And what *blague*, what calling for coffee *pour le petit Whistler, pour notre petit Américain!* And what songs!

> *"Car il n'est pas mort, larifla! fla! fla!*
> *Non, c'est qu'il dort.*
> *Pour le réveiller, trinquons nos verres!*
> *Pour le réveiller, trinquons encore!"*

That Herr Schmitz was paid and delivered up the plates the prints are the proof. Some years after Whistler went back to Cologne with his mother. In the evening he slipped away to the old, little hotel, where the landlord and the landlord's daughter, grown up, recognised him and rejoiced.

These stories, and hundreds like them, still float about the Quarter, told not only by Whistler, but by *les vieux*, who shake their heads over the present degeneracy of students and the tameness of student life—stories of the clay model of the heroic statue of Géricault, left, for want of money, swathed in rags, and sprinkled every morning until at last even the rags had to be sold, and then, when they were taken off, Géricault had sprouted with mushrooms that paid for a feast in the Quarter and enough clay to finish the statue: stories of a painter, in his empty studio, hiring a piano by the month that the landlord might see it carried upstairs and get a new idea of his tenant's assets; stories of the monkey tied to a string, let loose in other people's larders, then pulled back, clasping loaves of bread and bottles of wine to its

bosom; stories of students, with bedclothes pawned, sleeping in chests of drawers to keep warm; stories of Courbet's *Baigneuse* in wonderful Highland costume at the students' balls; stories of practical jokes at the Louvre. It was the day of practical jokes, *les charges:* and Courbet, whom they worshipped, was the biggest *blageur* of them all, eventually signing his death-warrant with that last terrible *charge*, the fall of the Column Vendôme, which Paris never forgave.

In this atmosphere, Whistler's spirit, so alarming to his mother, found stimulus, and it is not to be wondered if his gaiety struck everyone in Paris as in St. Petersburg and Pomfret, West Point and Washington.

CHAPTER VII: WORKING DAYS IN THE LATIN QUARTER. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-FIVE TO EIGHTEEN FIFTY-NINE CONTINUED

The stories cannot be left out of Whistler's life as a student, for they lived in his memory. The English students brought back the impression that he was an idler, the French thought so too, and the English believe to-day that he was an idler always. And yet he worked in Paris as much as he played. His convictions, his preferences, his prejudices, were formed during those years. His admiration for Poe, a West Point man, was strengthened by the hold Poe had taken of French men of letters. His disdain of nature, his contempt for anecdote in art as a concession to the ignorant public, his translation of the subjects of painting into musical terms, and much else charged against him as deliberate pose, can be traced to Baudelaire. It is incomprehensible how he found time to read while a student, and yet he knew the literature of the day. With artists and their movements he was more familiar. He mastered all that Gleyre could teach on the one hand, Courbet on the other. He came under the influence of Lecocq de Boisbaudran, who was occupied with the study of values, effects of night, and training of memory. It is absurd for anyone to say that Whistler idled away his four full years in Paris.

The younger men in their rebellion against official art were not so foolish as to disdain the Old Masters. They went to the Louvre

to learn how to use their eyes and their hands. There they copied the pictures, and there they met each other. To Whistler the Frenchmen were more sympathetic than the English, and he joined them at the Louvre. Respect for the great traditions of art always was his standard: "What is not worthy of the Louvre is not art," he said. Rembrandt, Hals, and Velasquez were the masters by whom he was influenced. There are only a few pictures by Velasquez in the Louvre, and Whistler's early appreciation of him has been a puzzle to some, who, to account for it, have credited him with a journey when a student to Madrid. But that journey was not made in the fifties or ever, though he planned it more than once. A great deal could be learned about Velasquez without going to Spain. Whistler knew the London galleries, and in 1857 he visited the Art Treasures Exhibition at Manchester, taking Henri Martin with him. There was a difficulty about the money for their railway fares, and he suggested to T. Armstrong that he might borrow it from a friend of the family who was manager of the North-Western. "But have you paid him the three hundred francs he has already lent you?" Armstrong asked. "Why, no," Whistler answered; "ought that to make any difference?" And he consulted the friend as to whether it would not be the right thing to ask for another loan. From this friend, or somebody, he managed to get the money, and Miss Emily Chapman finds in her diaries, which she has consulted for us, that on September 11, 1857, Rose, her sister, "went to Darwen and found Whistler and Henri Martin staying at Earnsdale" with another sister, Mrs. Potter; "a merry evening," the note finishes. Fourteen fine examples of Velasquez were in the Manchester Exhibition, lent from private collections in England, among them the *Venus*, *Admiral Pulido Pareja*, *Duke Olivarez on Horseback*, *Don Balthazar in the Tennis Court*, some of them now in the British National Gallery.

Whistler once described himself to us as "a surprising youth, suddenly appearing in the group of French students from no one knew where, with my *Mère Gérard* and the *Piano Picture* [*At the Piano*] for introduction, and making friends with Fantin and Legros, who had already arrived, and Courbet, whom they were all raving about, and who was very kind to me."

The *Piano Picture* was painted toward the end of his student

years in Paris, the *Mère Gérard* a little earlier, so that this agrees with Fantin's notes. In 1858, Fantin says, "I was copying the *Marriage Feast at Cana* in the Louvre when I saw passing one day a strange creature—*personnage étrange, le Whistler en chapeau bizarre*, who, amiable and charming, stopped to talk, and the talk was the beginning of our friendship, strengthened that evening at the *Café Molière*."

Carolus Duran writes us, from the Académie de France in Rome, that he and Whistler met as students in Paris; after that he lost sight of Whistler until the days of the new *Salon*, but, though there were a few meetings then, his memories are altogether of the student years. Bracquemond has recalled for us that he was making the preliminary drawing for his etching after Holbein's *Erasmus* in the Louvre when he first saw Whistler. Their meetings were cordial, but never led to intimacy. With Legros Whistler's friendship did become intimate, and the two, with Fantin, formed at that date what Whistler called their "Society of Three."

Fantin was somewhat older, and had been studying much longer, and had, among students, a reputation for wide and sound knowledge: "a learned painter," Armstrong says. M. Bénédite thinks that the friendship was useful to Fantin, but of the greatest importance to Whistler, on whose art in its development it had a marked influence. Mr. Luke Ionides, on the other hand, insists that "even in those early days, Whistler's influence was very much felt. He had decided views, which were always listened to with respect and regard by many older artists, who seemed to recognise his genius." The truth probably is that Whistler and Fantin influenced each other. They worked in sympathy, and the understanding between them was complete. They not only studied in the Louvre, but joined the group at Bonvin's studio to work from the model under Courbet.

With Courbet, we come to an influence which cannot be doubted, much as Whistler regretted it as time went on. Oulevey remembers Whistler calling on Courbet once, and saying enthusiastically as he left the house, "*C'est un grand homme!*" and for several years his pictures showed how strong this influence was. M. Duret even sees in Courbet's "Manifestoes" forerunners of Whistler's letters at a later date to the papers. Courbet, whatever mad pranks he might play with the

bourgeois, was seriousness itself in his art, and the men who studied under him learned to be serious, Whistler most of all.

The proof of Whistler's industry is in his work—in his pictures and prints, which are amazing in quality and quantity for the student who, Sir Edward Poynter believes, worked in two or three years only as many weeks. It would be nearer the truth to say that he never stopped working. Everything that interested him he made use of. The women he danced with at night were his models by day: Fumette, who, as she crouches, her hair loose on her shoulders, in that early etching, looks the *Tigresse* who tore up his drawings in a passion; and Finette, the dancer in a famous quadrille, who, when she came to London, was announced as "*Madame Finette in the cancan, the national dance of France.*" His friends had to pose for him: Drouet, in the plate, done, he told us, in two sittings, one of two and a half hours, the other of an hour and a half; Axenfeld, the brother of a famous physician; Becquet, the sculptor-musician, "the greatest man who ever lived" to his friends, to the world unknown; Astruc, painter, sculptor, poet, editor of *L'Artiste*, of whom his wife said that he was the first man since the Renaissance who combined all the arts, but who is only remembered in Whistler's print; Delâtre, the printer; Riault, the engraver. Bibi Valentin was the son of another engraver. And there is the amusing pencil sketch of Fantin in bed on a winter day, working away in his overcoat, muffler, and top hat, trying to keep warm: one kept among a hundred lost. The streets where Whistler wandered, the restaurants where he dined, became his studios. At the house near the Rue Dauphine he etched Bibi Lalouette. His *Soupe à Trois Sous* was done in a *cabaret* kept by Martin, whose portrait is in the print at the extreme left, and who was famous in the Quarter for having won the Cross of the Legion of Honour at an earlier age than any man ever decorated, and then promptly losing it. Mr. Ralph Thomas says: "While Whistler was etching this, at twelve o'clock at night, a *gendarme* came up to him and wanted to know what he was doing. Whistler gave him the plate upside down, but officialism could make nothing of it."

There is hardly one of these etchings that is not a record of his daily life and of the people among whom he lived, though to make it such a record was the last thing he was thinking of.

Whistler's first set of etchings was published in November 1858. The prints were not the first he made after leaving Washington. On the rare *Au Sixième*, supposed to be unique, Haden, to whom it had belonged, wrote, " Probably the first of Whistler's etchings," but then Haden wrote these things on others, and knew little about them. A portrait of himself, another of his niece *Annie Haden*, the *Dutchman holding the Glass*, are as early, if not earlier. There were twelve plates, some done in Paris, some during the journey to the Rhine, some in London. There was also an etched title with his portrait, for which Ernest, putting on the big hat, sat. Etched above is " *Douze Eaux Fortes d'après Nature par James Whistler*," and to one side, " *Imp. Delâtre, Rue St. Jacques*, 171, *Paris, Nov.* 1858." Whistler dedicated the set to *mon vieil ami Seymour Haden*, and issued and sold it himself for two guineas. Delâtre printed the plates, and, standing at his side, Drouet said, Whistler learned the art. Delâtre's shop was the room described by the De Goncourts, with the two windows looking on a bare garden, the star wheel, the man in grey blouse pulling it, the old noisy clock in the corner, the sleeping dog, the children peeping in at the door; the room where they waited for their first proof with the emotion they thought nothing else could give. Drouet said that Whistler never printed at this time. But Oulevey remembers a little press in the Rue Campagne-Première, and Whistler pulling the proofs for those who came to buy them. He was already hunting for old paper, loitering at the boxes along the *quais*, tearing out fly-leaves from old books. Passages in many plates of the series, especially in *La Mère Gérard* and *La Marchande de Moutarde*, are, as we have said, like his work in *The Coast Survey, No.* 1. For the only time, and as a result of his training at Washington, his handling threatened to become mannered. But in the *Street at Saverne* he overcame his mannerism, while in others, not in the series but done during these years, the *Drouet, Soupe à Trois Sous, Bibi Lalouette*, he had perfected his early style of drawing, biting, and dry-point. We never asked him how the French plates were bitten, but, no doubt, it was in the traditional way by biting all over and stopping out. They were drawn directly from Nature, as can be seen in his portraits of places which are reversed in the prints. So far as we know, he scarcely ever made a preliminary sketch. We can recall none of his etchings at any

period that might have been done from memory or sketches, except the *Street at Saverne*, the Venetian *Nocturnes*, the *Nocturne*, *Dance House*, Amsterdam, *Weary*, and *Fanny Leyland* portraits.

His first commissions in Paris were, he told us, copies made in the Louvre. They were for Captain Williams, a Stonington man, familiarly known as "Stonington Bill," whose portrait he had painted before leaving home. "Stonington Bill" must have liked it, for when he came to Paris shortly afterwards he gave Whistler a commission to paint as many copies at the Louvre as he chose for twenty-five dollars apiece. Whistler said he copied a snow scene with a horse and soldier standing by and another at its feet, and never afterwards could remember who was the painter; the busy picture detective may run it to ground for the edification of posterity. There was a St. Luke with a halo and draperies; a woman holding up a child towards a barred window beyond which, seen dimly, was the face of a man; and an inundation, no doubt *The Deluge* or *The Wreck*. He was sure he must have made something interesting out of them, he knew there were wonderful things even then—the beginnings of harmonies and of purple schemes—he supposed it must have been intuitive. Another Stonington man commissioned him to paint Ingres' *Andromeda* chained to the rock—probably the *Angelina* of Ingres which he and Tissot are said to have copied side by side, though a copy of an *Andromeda* by him has been shown in New York, and other alleged copies are now turning up. All, he said, might be still at Stonington, and shown there as marvellous things by Whistler. To these may be added the *Diana* by Boucher in the London Memorial Exhibition, owned by Mr. Louis Winans, and the group of cavaliers after Velasquez, the one copy Fantin remembered his doing. A study of a nun was sent to the London Exhibition, but not shown, with the name "Wisler" on the back of the canvas, not a bad study of drapery, which may have been, despite the name, another of his copies or done in a sketch class.

The first original picture in Paris was, he assured us, the *Mère Gérard*, in white cap, holding a flower, which he gave to Swinburne. There is another painting of her, we believe, and from Drouet we heard of a third, which has vanished. Whistler painted a number of portraits; some it would probably be impossible to trace, a few are well

known. One—a difficult piece of work, he said—was of his father, after a lithograph sent him for the purpose by his brother George, and he began another of Henry Harrison, whom he had known in Russia. A third was of himself in his big hat. Two were studies of models : the *Tête de Paysanne*, a woman in a white cap, younger than the *Mère Gérard*, and the *Head of an Old Man Smoking*, a pedlar of crockery whom Whistler came across one day in the Halles, a full face with large brown hat, for long the property of Drouet and left by him to the Louvre. But the finest is *At the Piano*, *The Piano Picture* as Whistler called it. It is the portrait of his sister and his niece, the " wonderful little Annie " of the etchings, now Mrs. Charles Thynne, who gave him many sittings, and to whom, in return, he gave his pencil sketches made on the journey to Alsace.

Mr. Gallatin, in *Portraits of Whistler*, and M. Duret, in the second edition of *Whistler*, have reproduced an oil portrait entitled *Whistler Smoking*, which was bought from a French family in 1913. The most cursory glance at even the reproduction is enough to show that the portrait is devoid of merit, while the statement that it was hidden from 1860 to 1913 would require considerable further proof. The whole thing is but a clumsy attempt to imitate the *Whistler in the Big Hat*, as well as the etching of the same subject. Every part of it is stolen from some other work, down to the hand or handkerchief, just indicated, which is taken from the portrait of his mother. It is true that the signature is on the painting, but this no longer proves anything, as a signature is the easiest part of a work of art to forge.

The portraits " smell of the Louvre." The method is acquired from close study of the Old Masters. " Rembrandtish " is the usual criticism passed on these early canvases, with their paint laid thickly on and their heavy shadows. Indeed, it is evident that his own portrait, *Whistler in the Big Hat*, was suggested by Rembrandt's *Young Man* in the Louvre. To his choice of subjects, in his pictures as in his etchings, he brought the realism of Courbet, painting people as he saw them, and not in clothes borrowed from the classical and mediæval wardrobes of the fashionable studio. Yet there is the personal note : Whistler does not efface himself in his devotion to the masters. This is felt in the way a head or a figure is placed on the canvas. The arrangement of the pictures on the wall and the

AT THE PIANO

OIL

In the possession of Edmund Davis, Esq.

(*See page* 52)

WAPPING

OIL

In the possession of Mrs. Hutton

(*See page* 63)

mouldings of the dado in *At the Piano*, the harmonious balance of the black and white in the dresses of the mother and the little girl, show the sense of design, of pattern, which he brought to perfection in the *Mother*, *Carlyle*, and *Miss Alexander*. There was nothing like it in the painting of the other young men, of Degas, Fantin, Legros, Ribot, Manet; nothing like it in the work of the older man, their leader, when painting *L'Enterrement à Ornans* and *Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet*. M. Duret says that Whistler's fellow students, who had immediately recognised his etchings, now accepted his paintings, which confirms Whistler's statement to us.

At the Piano was sent to the *Salon* of 1859 with two etchings the titles of which are not given. The etchings were hung, the picture was rejected. It may have been because of what was personal in it; strong personality in the young usually fares that way at official hands. Fantin's story is:

"One day Whistler brought back from London the *Piano Picture*, representing his sister and niece. He was refused with Legros, Ribot, and myself at the *Salon*. Bonvin, whom I knew, interested himself in our rejected pictures, and exhibited them in his studio, and invited his friends, of whom Courbet was one, to see them. I recall very well that Courbet was struck with Whistler's picture."

Two portraits by Fantin, some studies of still life by Ribot, and Legros' portrait of his father, which had also been rejected, were shown. The rejection was a scandal. The injustice was flagrant, the exhibitors at Bonvin's found themselves famous, and Whistler's picture impressed many artists besides Courbet. With its exhibition Whistler ceased to be the student, though he was a student all his life; it was only in his last years that he felt he was "beginning to understand," he often said to us.

CHAPTER VIII: THE BEGINNINGS IN LONDON. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-NINE TO EIGHTEEN SIXTY-THREE.

It was now that Whistler began his endless journeys between Paris and London. At first he stayed with his sister, Lady Haden, at 62 Sloane Street, sometimes bringing with him Henri Martin or Legros.

In 1859 he invited Fantin, promising him glory and fortune. In his notes Fantin wrote:

"Whistler talked about me at this moment to his brother-in-law, Seymour Haden, who urged me to come to London; he had also talked about me to Boxall. I should like it known that it was Whistler who introduced me to England."

Fantin arrived in time for them to go to the Academy, then still in the east end of the National Gallery. Whistler exhibited for the first time, and *Two Etchings from Nature*—a perplexing title, for all his etchings were "from Nature"—were hung in the little octagon room, or "dark cell," reserved for black-and-white. "*Les souvenirs les plus vifs que j'ai conservés de ce temps à Londres*," Fantin wrote, "*étaient notre admiration pour l'exposition des tableaux de Millais à l'Academy*." Millais showed *The Vale of Rest*, and the two young men, fresh from Paris studios, recognised in his work the realism which, though conceived and expressed so differently, was the aim of the Pre-Raphaelites as of Courbet.

Seymour Haden, who had already etched some of his finest plates, was kind to his visitors. He not only ordered copies from Fantin—amongst them one of the many Fantin made of Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana*—but he bought the pictures of Legros, who was "at one moment in so deplorable a condition," Whistler said to us, "that it needed God or a lesser person to pull him out of it. And so I brought him over to London, and for a while he worked in my studio. He had, before coming, sold a church interior to Haden, who liked it, though he found the floor out of perspective. One day he took it to the room upstairs where he did his etchings, and turned the key. When it reappeared the floor was in perspective according to Haden. A gorgeous frame was bought, and the picture was hung conspicuously in the drawing-room."

Whistler thought Haden restive when he heard that Legros was coming, but nothing was said. The first day Legros was impressed; he had been accustomed to seeing himself in cheap frames, if in any frame at all. But gradually he looked inside the frame, and Haden's work dawned upon him. That he could not stand. What was he to do? he asked Whistler. "Run off with it," Whistler suggested. "We got it down, called a four-wheeler, and carried it away to the

studio—our own little *kopje*," for Whistler told us the story in the days of the Boer War. Haden discovered his loss as soon as he got home, and in a rage hurried after them to the studio. But when he saw it on an easel, Legros repainting the perspective according to his idea, well, there was nothing to say. Where the studio was we do not know.

Haden even endured Ernest, who had not yet caught up with the seasons, and who went about in terror of the butler, taking his daily walks in slippers rather than expose his boots to the servants, and enchanting Whistler by asking "*Mais, mon cher, qu'est-ce que c'est que cette espèce de cataracte de Niagara?*" when Haden turned on the shower-bath in the morning. Fantin was almost as dismayed by the luxury at the Hadens'. "What lunches!" he wrote home, "what roast beef and sherry! And what dinners—always champagne!" And if he was distressed by the street organs grinding out the *Miséréré* of Verdi, he could console himself by listening to Lady Haden's brilliant playing on the piano, until *paradisiaque* was the adjective he found to describe his life there to his parents.

Whistler fell in at once with the English students whom he had known in Paris: Poynter, Armstrong, Luke and Aleco Ionides. Du Maurier came back from Antwerp in 1860, and for several months he and Whistler lived together in Newman Street. Armstrong remembers their studio, with a rope like a clothes-line stretched across it and, floating from it, a bit of brocade no bigger than a handkerchief, which was their curtain to shut off the corner used as a bedroom. There was hardly ever a chair to sit on, and often with the brocade a towel hung from the line: their decoration and drapery. Du Maurier's first *Punch* drawing—in a volume full of crinolines and Leech (vol. xxxix., October 6, 1860)—shows the two, shabby, smoking, calling at a photographer's to be met with an indignant, "No smoking here, sirs!" followed by a severe, "Please to remember, gentlemen, that this is not a common Hartist's Studio!" The figure at the door, with curly hair, top hat, glass in his eye, hands behind his back smoking a cigarette, is Whistler. Probably it was then also that Du Maurier made a little drawing, in Mr. Howard Mansfield's collection of Whistler, Charles Keene, and himself, with their autographs below; Whistler again with a glass in his eye.

"Nearly always, on Sunday, he used to come to our house," Mr. Ionides tells us, and there was no more delightful house in London. Alexander Ionides, the father, was a wealthy merchant with a talent for gathering about him all the interesting people in town or passing through, artists, musicians, actors, authors. Mr. Luke Ionides says that Whistler came to their evenings and played in their private theatricals, and there remains a programme designed by Du Maurier with a drawing of himself, Whistler, and Aleco Ionides at the top, while Luke Ionides and his sister, Mrs. Coronio, stand below with the list of *dramatis personæ* between. And Whistler also took part in their masquerades and fancy-dress balls, once mystifying everybody by appearing in two different costumes in the course of the evening and winding up as a sweep. He never lost his joy in the memory of Alma-Tadema, on another of these occasions, as an "Ancient Roman" in toga and eye-glasses, crowned with flowers: "amazing," Whistler said, "with his bare feet and Romano-Greek St. John's Wooden eye!"

Mr. Arthur Severn writes us: "My first recollection of Whistler was at his brother-in-law's, Seymour Haden (he and Du Maurier were looking over some *Liber Studiorum* engravings), and then at Arthur Lewis' parties on Campden Hill, charming gatherings of talented men of all kinds, with plenty of listeners and sympathisers to applaud. The Moray Minstrels used to sing, conducted by John Foster, and when they were resting anyone who could do anything was put up. Du Maurier with Harold Sower would sing a duet, *Les Deux Aveugles;* Grossmith half killed us with laughter (it was at these parties he first came out). Stacy Marks was a great attraction, but towards the end of the evening, when we were all in accord, there were yells for Whistler, the eccentric Whistler! He was seized and stood up on a high stool, where he assumed the most irresistibly comic look, put his glass in his eye, and surveyed the multitude, who only yelled the more. When silence reigned he would begin to sing in the most curious way, suiting the action to the words with his small, thin, sensitive hands. His songs were in *argot* French, imitations of what he had heard in low *cabarets* on the Seine when he was at work there. What Whistler and Marks did was so entirely themselves and nobody else, so original or quaint, that they were certainly the favourites."

"Breezy, buoyant and debonair, sunny and affectionate," he seemed to George Boughton, who could not remember the time when "Whistler's sayings and doings did not fill the artistic air," nor when he failed to give a personal touch, a "something distinct" to his appearance. His "cool suit of linen duck and his jaunty straw hat" were conspicuous in London, where personality of dress was more startling than in Paris. Boughton refers to a flying trip to Paris at this period, when he was "flush of money and lovely in attire." Others recall meeting him, armed with two umbrellas, a white and a black, his practical preparation for all weathers. Val Prinsep speaks of the pink silk handkerchief stuck in his waistcoat, but this must have been later. "A brisk little man, conspicuous from his swarthy complexion, his gleaming eye-glass, and his shock of curly black hair, amid which shone his celebrated white lock," is Val Prinsep's description of him in the fifties.

But the white lock is not seen in any contemporary painting or etching. It was first introduced, as far as we can discover, in his portrait owned by the late Mr. McCulloch—the portrait a few years ago was in Detroit—and in the etching *Whistler with the White Lock*, 1879, though there may be earlier work showing it. We never asked him about it, and his family, friends, and contemporaries, whom we have asked, cannot explain it. Some say that it was a birthmark, others that he dyed all his hair save the one lock. But he did not dye his hair. Du Maurier, according to Dr. Williamson, attributed it to a wound, either by bullet or sword-cut, received at Valparaiso: the wound was sewn up, the white lock appeared almost immediately. Mr. Theodore Roussel tells a somewhat similar story. But we think if this were so, Whistler would have told us of it. In an exhibition of oil paintings and pastels by Whistler held in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, in March 1910, a painting was shown entitled *Sketch of Mr. Whistler*. It was lent by Mr. Charles L. Freer and was sold to him by an art dealer. We are by no means certain that it is genuine, though we have only see the reproduction, the frontispiece of the catalogue. J. recently went to Detroit, but in Mr. Freer's absence he was not allowed to see the painting. If it is genuine, it is most likely a study by Whistler of the Chinese dress in which he posed for Fantin. In Freer's sketch the white lock appears. Though

it could easily have been added later, its presence to us seems proof that the picture is most probably not genuine, and certainly is not contemporary, because in Fantin's head of Whistler from the *Toast*, in *Hommage à Delacroix*, and Whistler's own portraits of that time the white lock is not shown. Many, seeing him for the first time, mistook the white lock for a floating feather. He used to call it the *Mèche de Silas*, and it amused him to explain that the Devil caught those whom he would preserve by a lock of hair which turned white. Whatever its origin, Whistler cherished it with greatest care.

Whistler had stumbled upon a period in England when, though painters prospered, art was at a low ebb. Pre-Raphaelitism was on the wane. A few interesting young men were at work: Charles Keene, Boyd Houghton, Albert Moore; Fred Walker and George Mason. But Academicians were at the high tide of mid-Victorian success and sentiment. They puzzled Whistler no less than he puzzled them.

"Well, you know, it was this way. When I came to London I was received graciously by the painters. Then there was coldness, and I could not understand. Artists locked themselves up in their studios—opened the doors only on the chain; if they met each other in the street they barely spoke. Models went round with an air of mystery. When I asked one where she had been posing, she said, 'To Frith and Watts and Tadema.' 'Golly! what a crew!' I said, 'And that's just what they says when I told 'em I was a-posing to you!' Then I found out the mystery; it was the moment of painting the Royal Academy picture. Each man was afraid his subject might be stolen. It was the era of the subject. And, at last, on Varnishing Day, there was the subject in all its glory—wonderful! The British subject! Like a flash the inspiration came—the Inventor! And in the Academy there you saw him: the familiar model—the soldier or the Italian—and there he sat, hands on knees, head bent, brows knit, eyes staring; in a corner, angels and cogwheels and things; close to him his wife, cold, ragged, the baby in her arms; he had failed! The story was told; it was clear as day—amazing! The British subject! What."

Into this riot of subject, to the Academy of 1860, *At the Piano* was sent, with five prints: *Monsieur Astruc, Rédacteur du Journal*

'*L'Artiste*,' an unidentified portrait, and three of the Thames Set. Whistler had given *At the Piano*, the portrait of his sister and niece, to Seymour Haden, "in a way," he said:

"Well, you know, it was hanging there, but I had no particular satisfaction in that. Haden just then was playing the authority on art, and he could never look at it without pointing out its faults and telling me it never would get into the Academy—that was certain."

However, at the Academy it was accepted, Whistler's first picture in an English exhibition. The *Salon* was not held then every year, and he could not hope to repeat his success in Paris. But in London *At the Piano* was as much talked about as at Bonvin's. It was bought by John Phillip, the Academician (no relation to the family into which Whistler afterwards married). Phillip had just returned from Spain with, "well, you know, Spanish notions about things, and he asked who had painted the picture, and they told him a youth no one knew about, who had appeared from no one knew where. Phillip looked up my address in the catalogue and wrote to me at once to say he would like to buy it, and what was its price? I answered in a letter which, I am sure, must have been very beautiful. I said that, in my youth and inexperience, I did not know about these things, and I would leave to him the question of price. Phillip sent me thirty pounds; when the picture was last sold, to Edmund Davis, it brought two thousand eight hundred!"

Thackeray, Lady Ritchie tells us, "went to see the picture of Annie Haden standing by the piano, and admired it beyond words, and stood looking at it with real delight and appreciation." It was the only thing George Boughton brought vividly away in his memories of the Academy. The critics could not ignore it. "It at once made an impression," Mr. W. M. Rossetti wrote. As "an eccentric, uncouth, smudgy, phantom-like picture of a lady at a pianoforte, with a ghostly-looking child in a white frock looking on," it struck the *Daily Telegraph*. But the *Athenæum*, having discovered the "admirable etchings" in the octagon room, managed to see in the "*Piano Picture*, despite a recklessly bold manner and sketchiness of the wildest and roughest kind, a genuine feeling for colour and a splendid power of composition and design, which evince a just appreciation of nature very rare among artists. If the observer will look for a little while at this singular

production, he will perceive that it 'opens out' just as a stereoscopic view will—an excellent quality due to the artist's feeling for atmosphere and judicious gradation of light."

We quote these criticisms because the general idea is that Whistler waited long for notice. He was always noticed, praised or blamed, never ignored, after 1859.

Whistler went back to Paris late in that year. December 1859 is the date of his *Isle de la Cité*, etched from the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre, with Notre Dame in the distance and the Seine and its bridges between. It was his only attempt to rival Méryon, and he succeeded badly. The fact that he gave it up when half done shows that he thought so and was too big an artist to be an imitator, especially of a "little man like Méryon." Besides, he was much less in Paris now, for, though he preferred life there, he found his subjects in London, which he soon made his home, as it continued to be, except for a few intervals, until his death. It was not the people he cared for, nor the customs. He was drawn by the beauty that no one had felt with the same intensity and understanding.

He went to work on the river. In these first years he dated his prints and pictures, as he seldom did later, and 1859 is bitten on many of the Thames plates. He saw the river as no one had seen it before, in its grime and glitter, with its forest of shipping, its endless procession of barges, its grim warehouses, its huge docks, its little waterside inns. And as he saw it so he rendered it, as no one ever had before—as it is. It was left to the American youth to do for London what Rembrandt had done for Amsterdam. There were eleven plates on the Thames during this year. To make them he wandered from Greenwich to Westminster; they included *Black Lion Wharf*, *Tyzac, Whiteley and Co.*, which he never excelled at any period; and in each the warehouses or bridges, the docks or ships, are worked out with a mass and marvel of detail. The Pre-Raphaelites were not so faithful to Nature, so minute in their rendering. The series was a wonderful achievement for the young man of twenty-five never known to work by his English fellow students, a wonderful achievement for an artist of any age.

Those who thought he idled in Paris were as sure of his application in London. "On the Thames he worked tremendously," Armstrong

THE THAMES IN ICE

OIL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 63)

ROTHERHITHE

ETCHING. G. 66

(*See page* 63)

said, "not caring then to have people about or to let anyone see too much of his methods." He stayed for months at Wapping to be near his subjects, though not cutting himself off entirely from his friends. Sir Edward Poynter, Mr. Ionides, M. Legros, Du Maurier visited him. Mr. Ionides recalls long drives down by the Tower and the London Docks to get to the place, as out of the way now as then. He says Whistler lived in a little inn, rather rough, frequented by skippers and bargees, close to Wapping steamboat pier. But there is no doubt that much of his work was done from Cherry Gardens, on the other side of the river. Unfortunately it was not until after his death that we looked into this matter. At any rate, if he lived at Wapping, he worked a great deal at Cherry Gardens, also often from boats and barges, he told us, and this one can see in the prints. Sometimes he would get stranded in the mud, and at others cut off by the tide. "When his friends came," Armstrong wrote us, "they dined at an *ordinary* there used to be. People who had business at the wharves in the neighbourhood dined there, and Jimmie's descriptions of the company were always humorous." Mr. Ionides drove down once for a dinner-party Whistler gave at his inn:

"The landlord and several bargee guests were invited. Du Maurier was there also, and after dinner we had songs and sentiments. Jimmie proposed the landlord's health; he felt flattered, but we were in fits of laughter. The landlord was very jealous of his wife, who was rather inclined to flirt with Jimmie, and the whole speech was chaff of a soothing kind that he never suspected."

Another and more frequent visitor to Wapping was Serjeant Thomas, one of those patrons who recognise the young artist and appear when recognition is most needed. He bought drawings and prints from Holman Hunt and Legros when they were scarcely known, and he helped Millais through difficult days. Whistler had issued his French Set of etchings in London in 1859: *Twelve Etchings from Nature by James Abbott Whistler, London. Published by J. A. Whistler, At No. 62 Sloane Street* (Haden's house). The price, as in Paris, for *Artist's Proofs on India, two guineas.* Serjeant Thomas saw the prints, got to know Whistler, and arranged to publish them, and also the Thames etchings which he sold separately at 39 Old Bond Street, where he had opened a shop with his son, Edmund Thomas, as manager.

Mr. Percy Thomas, a younger son, has told us that, as a little fellow, he often went with his father by boat to Wapping, and that his father and brother posed for two of the figures—the third is Whistler—in *The Little Pool*, used as an invitation card. He has also told us that much of the printing was done at 39 Old Bond Street, where the family lived in the upper part of the house. A press was in one of the small rooms, and Whistler would come in the evening, when he happened to be in town, to bite and prove his plates. Sometimes he would not get to work until half-past ten or eleven. In those days he put his plate in a deep bath of acid, keeping to the technical methods of the Coast Survey, though it is said that the Coast Survey plates were banked up with wax and the acid poured over them. This is supposed to have been the method of Rembrandt. Serjeant Thomas, in his son's words, was " great for port wine," and he would fill a glass for Whistler, and Whistler would place the glass by the bath, and then work a little on the plate and then stop to sip the port, and he would say, " Excellent ! Very good indeed ! " and they never knew whether he meant the wine or the work. And the charm of his manner and his courtesy made it delightful to do anything for him. Serjeant Thomas brought Delâtre from Paris, the only man, he thought, who could print Whistler's etchings as the artist would have printed them himself. " Nobody," Ralph Thomas wrote, " has ever printed Mr. Whistler's etchings with success except himself and M. Delâtre," and to-day many people are of the same opinion. Whistler's relations with the firm were pleasant while they lasted. But they did not last long. Edmund Thomas cared less for art than the law, and in the shop he would sit at his desk reading his law books, never looking up nor leaving them, unless someone asked the price of a print or drawing. A successful business is not run on those lines, and in a few years he gave up art for the law, to his great advantage.

CHAPTER IX : THE BEGINNINGS IN LONDON. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN FIFTY-NINE TO EIGHTEEN SIXTY-THREE CONTINUED.

Whistler, in 1860, devoted more time to painting on the river and less to etching, though the *Rotherhithe* belongs to this year. One picture he described in a letter to Fantin. "*Chut! n'en parle pas à Courbet*" was his warning, as if afraid to trust so good a subject to anyone. It was to be a masterpiece, he had painted it three times, and he sent a sketch which M. Duret reproduced in his *Whistler*. M. Duret, unable to trace the picture, thought he might never have carried it beyond the sketch. But it was finished: the *Wapping* shown in the Academy of 1864, a proof how long Whistler kept his pictures before exhibiting them. In 1867 he sent it to the Paris Exhibition. It was bought by Mr. Thomas Winans, taken to Baltimore, where it has remained. Whistler wanted to exhibit it at Goupil's in 1892, but could not get it. Never seen in Europe since 1867, it has been forgotten. It was painted from an inn, probably The Angel on the water-side at Cherry Gardens which exists to-day, one of a row of old houses with overhanging balconies. In the foreground, in a shadowy corner of the inn balcony, is a sailor for whom a workman from Greaves' boat-building yard, Chelsea, sat; next, M. Legros; and on the other side of M. Legros, with her back turned to the river, the girl with copper-coloured hair, Jo, the model for *The White Girl* and *The Little White Girl*. On the river are the little square-rigged ships that still anchor there; on the opposite side is the long line of Wapping warehouses, which give the name. Artists feared Jo's slightly open bodice would prevent the picture being hung in the Royal Academy. But Whistler insisted, if it was rejected on that account, he would open the bodice more and more every year until he was elected and hung it himself.

He painted *The Thames in Ice* this year (1860) from the same inn. It was called, when first exhibited, *The Twenty-fifth of December, 1860, on the Thames*. For an idle apprentice it was a strange way of spending Christmas. Whistler told us that Haden bought it for ten pounds—ample pay, Haden said: three pounds for each of the three days he spent painting it, and a pound over. To Whistler the pay seemed

anything but ample. "You know, my sister was in the house, and women have their ideas about things, and I did what she wanted, to please her!"

Two other pictures of 1860 are the portrait of Mr. Luke Ionides and *The Music Room*. In both the influence of Courbet is evident. The portrait, painted in the Newman Street studio, has the heavy handling of *The Piano*, though much more brilliant. But the other picture is a tremendous advance.

Fantin could not have been more conscientious in rendering the life about him as he found it than Whistler in *The Music Room;* only, the room in the London house, with its gay chintz curtains, has none of the sombre simplicity of the interior where Fantin's sisters sit. Fantin's home had an austerity he made beautiful; the Hadens' house had colour—*Harmony in Green and Rose* was Whistler's later title for the picture. He emphasised the gaiety by introducing a strong black note in the standing figure, Miss Boot, while the cool light from the window falls on "wonderful little Annie," in the same white frock she wears in *The Piano Picture*. Mrs. Thynne (Annie Haden) says:

"I was very young when *The Music Room* was painted, and beyond the fact of not minding sitting, in spite of the interminable length of time, I do not know that I can say more. It was a distinctly amusing time for me. He was always so delightful and enjoyed the 'no lessons' as much as I did. One day in *The Morning Call* (the first name of *The Music Room*) I did get tired without knowing it, and suddenly dissolved into tears, whereupon he was full of the most tender remorse, and rushed out and bought me a lovely Russia leather writing set, which I am using at this very moment! The actual music-room still exists in Sloane Street, though the present owners have enlarged it, and the date of the picture must have been '60 or '61, after his return from Paris. It was then he gave me the pencil sketches I lent to the London Memorial Exhibition. I had kept them in an album he had also brought me from Paris, with my name in gold stamped outside, of which I was very proud. We were always good friends, and I have nothing all through those early days but the most delightful remembrance of him."

This picture is described under three titles: *The Morning Call*, *The Music Room*, and *Harmony in Green and Rose*, *The Music Room;* the

present confusion in Whistler's titles is usually the result of his own vagueness. It became the property of Mrs. Réveillon, George Whistler's daughter, and was carried off to St. Petersburg, never to return to London until the exhibition at the Goupil Gallery in 1892.

It has become the fashion to say that Whistler had not mastered his trade and could not use oil paint. These early pictures are technically as accomplished as the work of any of his contemporaries. He never was taught, few artists are, the elements of his trade, and some of his paintings have suffered. *The Music Room* and *The Thames in Ice*, so far as we can remember, are wonderfully fresh. They were painted more directly, more thinly, than the *Wapping*, in which the paint is thickly piled, as in the *Piano Picture*, which has cracked, no doubt the result of his working over it probably on a bad ground. Of two pictures painted at the same period, the *Wapping* is badly cracked, and the *Thames in Ice* is in perfect condition. But this is due to his want of knowledge of the chemical properties of paints and mediums. Later, he gave great attention to these matters. He kept the *Wapping* four years before he showed it. Though started down the river in 1860, it contains a portrait of Greaves' man, whom he did not see for two or three years after. Walter Greaves stated, or allowed to be stated, in a preface to the catalogue of his exhibition in May 1911, that he met Whistler in the late fifties when Whistler lived in Chelsea and made the Thames series of etchings. But the statement was proved to be inaccurate, and the preface was withdrawn. We have quoted Greaves on several occasions, but, before doing so, we have verified every statement of importance he made to us, and we first met him some few years ago when his memory was clearer and more reliable, and when he possessed letters from Whistler which we have seen.

Mr. Thynne stood in 1860 for the beautiful dry-point *Annie Haden*, in big crinoline and soup-plate hat, the print Whistler told Mr. E. G. Kennedy he would choose by which to be remembered. It was the year also of the portraits of Axenfeld, Riault, and "Mr. Mann." In 1861 there were more plates on the Upper as well as the Lower Thames. Two of the plates of 1861 were published as illustrations by the Junior Etching Club in *Passages from Modern English Poets*, and Whistler proved the plates at the press of Day and Son, and met the lad he called "the best professional printer in England," Frederick Goulding.

Whistler told us that he worked about three weeks on each of the Thames plates. He therefore must have spent on dated plates alone thirty-six weeks in 1861, leaving but fourteen weeks for other work and for play. Some of them are much less elaborate than the *Drouet*, which, Drouet said, was done in five hours, so that it seems difficult to reconcile the two statements. But it was about the *Black Lion Wharf*, one of the fullest of detail, that we asked Whistler. We had many discussions with him about them. Whistler maintained that they were youthful performances, and J. as strongly maintained that that had nothing to do with the matter; that he never surpassed the wonderful drawing and composition and biting. He insisted that his later work in Venice and in Holland was a great development, a great advance, and his final answer was: "Well, you like them more than I do!" But there is no doubt that the Thames plates, notably the *Black Lion Wharf*, have, for artistic rendering of inartistic subjects and for perfect biting, never been approached. Another thing that astonished J. was that he could see such detail and put it on a copper-plate. "H'm," was Whistler's comment, "that's what they all say."

Whistler got to know the Upper Thames when he stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Edwards at Sunbury. Edwards figures in his dry-point *Encamping* with M. W. Ridley, who was Whistler's first pupil, and Traer, Haden's assistant, not "Freer," as he has long masqueraded in Mr. Wedmore's catalogue. Ridley also is in *The Storm* and *The Guitar-Player*. To these visits we owe an etching of *Whistler at Moulsey*, by Edwards. Whistler introduced Fantin, who, in a note for 1861, refers to the "*jolies journées chez Edwards à Sunbury*." Mrs. Edwards wrote us shortly before her death:

"Whistler often came to see me, turning up always when least expected, perhaps driving down in a hansom cab from London. At that time there was no railway at Sunbury; Hampton Court three miles distant. He might send a line to be met by boat at Hampton Court. He was always very eccentric."

Doubtless the driving down was an eccentricity. But Whistler knew he might see some "foolish sunset," or a Nocturne, on the way. "We had a large boat with waterproof cover," Mrs. Edwards added; "my husband and friends several times went up the river and slept in the boat. Whistler went once," when he did the plate *Encamping*

and possibly *Sketching* and *The Punt*, and in Mrs. Edwards' words, "got rheumatism." It had been his trouble since St. Petersburg. He could not risk exposure.

Whistler, though not settled in London, sent work regularly to the Academy, where it was an unfailing shock to the critics. He showed his *Mère Gérard* in 1861. The *Athenæum* described the picture as "a fine, powerful-toned, and eminently characteristic study." The *Daily Telegraph* thought it "far fitter hung over the stove in the studio than exhibited at the Royal Academy, though it is replete with evidence of genius and study. If Mr. Whistler would leave off using mud and clay on his palette and paint cleanly, like a gentleman, we should be happy to bestow any amount of praise on him, for he has all the elements of a great artist in his composition. But we must protest against his soiled and miry ways." It seemed a good, serious study of an old woman and nothing more, when we saw it in the London Memorial Exhibition, and the appallingly low level of the Academy alone can explain the attention it attracted.

Whistler was in France in the summer of 1861, painting *The Coast of Brittany*, or *Alone with the Tide*, which might have been signed by Courbet—an arrangement in brown under a cloudy sky, a stretch of sand at low tide in the foreground, water-washed rocks against which a peasant girl sleeps, a deep blue sea beyond. It was "a beautiful thing," Whistler said years afterwards. At Perros Guirec he made his splendid dry-point *The Forge*. Another print of this year is the rare dry-point of Jo, who, for awhile, appeared in Whistler's work as often as Saskia in Rembrandt's. She was Irish. Her father has been described to us as a sort of Captain Costigan, and Jo—Joanna Heffernan, Mrs. Abbott—as a woman of next to no education, but of keen intelligence, who, before she had ceased to sit to Whistler, knew more about painting than many painters, had become well read, and had great charm. Her value to Whistler as a model was enormous, and she was an important element in his life during the first London years. She was with him in France in 1861–2, going to Paris in the winter to give him sittings for the big *White Girl*, which he painted in a studio in the Boulevard des Batignolles hung all in white. There Courbet met her, and, looking at the copper-coloured hair, saw beauty in the beautiful. He painted her, though perhaps not that winter, as *La Belle Irlandaise*.

and as *Jo, femme d'Irlande*. Whistler's study of Jo, *Note Blanche*, lent by Mrs. Sickert to the Paris Memorial Exhibition, was doubtless done in 1861, for the technique is like Courbet's. Drouet remembered breakfasts in the studio which Whistler cooked.

He fell ill before the end of the winter. Miss Chapman says he was poisoned by the white lead used in the picture. Her brother, a doctor, recommended a journey to the Pyrenees. At Guéthary Whistler was nearly drowned when bathing. He wrote to Fantin:

"It was sunset, the sea was very rough, I was caught in the huge waves, swallowing gallons of salt water. I swam and I swam, and the more I swam the less near I came to the shore. Ah! my dear Fantin, to feel my efforts useless and to know people were looking on saying, 'But the *Monsieur* amuses himself, he must be strong!' I cry, I scream in despair—I disappear three, four times. At last they understand. A brave railroad man rushes to me, and is rolled over twice on the sands. My model hears the call, arrives at a gallop, jumps in the sea like a Newfoundland, manages to catch me by the foot, and the two pull me out." *

At Biarritz he painted *The Blue Wave*, a great sea rolling in and breaking on the shore under a fine sky, but quite unlike the *Coast of Brittany*. Whistler painted few pictures in which the composition, the arrangement, is more obvious. It is an extraordinary piece of work. It has lately been said that he painted this picture after he had seen Courbet's *Vague*, now in the Louvre. But the *Vague* was not shown until 1870. If there was any influence, it was all the other way. At Fuenterrabia Whistler was in Spain, for the only time; "Spaniards from the *Opéra-Comique* in the street, men in *bérets* and red blouses, children like little Turks." He wanted to go farther, to Madrid, and he urged Fantin to join him. Together they would look at *The Lances* and *The Spinners* as together they had studied at the Louvre. In another letter he promised to describe Velasquez to Fantin, to bring back photographs. Such "glorious painting" should be copied. "*Ah! mon cher, comme il a du travailler*," he winds up in his enthusiasm. But the journey ended at Fuenterrabia. Fantin could not join him. Madrid was put off for another spring, for ever, though the journey was for ever being planned anew.

* See Duret's *Whistler*.

THE MUSIC ROOM

HARMONY IN GREEN AND ROSE

OIL

In the possession of Colonel F. Hecker

(*See page 64*)

ANNIE HADEN

DRY-POINT. G. 62

(*See page 65*)

Whistler sent *The White Girl* to the Academy of 1862, with *The Twenty-fifth of December*, 1860, *on the Thames; Alone with the Tide;* and one etching, *Rotherhithe*. *The White Girl* was rejected. The two other pictures and the print were accepted, hung, and praised. The *Athenæum* compared the *Rotherhithe* to Rembrandt. Whistler could scarcely be mentioned as an etcher without this comparison; since Rembrandt his were "the most striking and original" etchings, everyone then said, Mr. W. M. Rossetti being among the first in England to say it boldly. *Alone with the Tide* was approved as "perfectly expressed," and *The Twenty-fifth of December* as "broad and vigorous, though perhaps vigour was pushed over the bounds of coarseness to become mere dash." Other work he showed elsewhere was praised. *The Punt* and *Sketching*, published in *Passages from Modern English Poets*, were singled out for admiration. *Thames Warehouses* and *Black Lion Wharf* won him recognition as "the most admirable etcher of the present day," at South Kensington Museum, where in 1862 an International Exhibition was held. Whistler had no pictures, but the collection of modern continental art was one of the finest ever seen in England.

In nothing had Whistler been so completely himself as in *The White Girl*, and it failed to please. The artist is born to pick and choose, and group with science, the elements in Nature that the result may be beautiful, he wrote in *The Ten o'Clock*, and *The White Girl* was his first attempt to conform to a principle no one ever put so clearly into words. It was an attempt, we know now, comparing the painting to the symphonies and harmonies that came after. But at the time it was disquieting in its defiance of modern conventions. It was without subject according to Victorian standards, and the bold massing of white upon white was more bewildering than the minute detail of the Pre-Raphaelites. This summer (1862) the Berners Street Gallery was opened, "with the avowed purpose of placing before the public the works of young artists who may not have access to the ordinary galleries." Maclise, Egg, Frith, Cooper, Poynter forced their way in. But the Manager had the courage to exhibit *The White Girl*, stating in the catalogue that the Royal Academy had refused it. The *Athenæum* was independent enough to say that it was the most prominent picture in the collection, though not the most perfect, for,

"able as this bizarre production shows Mr. Whistler to be, we are certain that in a very few years he will recognize the reasonableness of its rejection. It is one of the most incomplete paintings we ever met with. A woman in a quaint morning dress of white, with her hair about her shoulders, stands alone in the background of nothing in particular. But for the rich vigour of the textures, we might conceive this to be some old portrait by Zucchero, or a pupil of his, practising in a provincial town. The face is well done, but it is not that of Mr. Wilkie Collins' *Woman in White*."

The criticism brought from Whistler his first letter to the press, published in the *Athenæum*, July 5:

"62 Sloane Street. July 1, 1862.

"May I beg to correct an erroneous impression likely to be confirmed in your last number? The Proprietors of the Berners Street Gallery have, without my sanction, called my picture '*The Woman in White*.' I had no intention whatever of illustrating Mr. Wilkie Collins' novel; it so happens, indeed, that I have never read it. My painting simply represents a girl dressed in white, standing in front of a white curtain.—I am, &c., James Whistler."

The critics were spared the sting of his wit, but they disapproved strongly enough for him to tell his friends that *The White Girl* enjoyed a *succès d'exécration*.

A different success awaited his Thames etchings in Paris, where they were shown in a dealer's gallery. Baudelaire saw them and understood, as he was the first to understand the work of Manet, Poe, Wagner, and many others. He wrote:

"*Tout récemment, un jeune artiste américain, M. Whistler, exposait à la galerie Martinet une série d'eaux fortes, subtiles, éveillées comme l'improvisation et l'inspiration, représentant les bords de la Tamise; merveilleux fouillis d'agrés, de vergues, de cordages; chaos de brumes, de fourneaux et de fumées tire-bouchonnées; poésie profonde et compliquée d'une vaste capitale.*"

According to Mr. W. M. Rossetti, Whistler soon moved to Queen's Road, Chelsea: "I fancy that the houses in Queen's Road have been much altered since Whistler was there in 1862–63. They were then low (say two-storeyed), quite old-fashioned houses, of a cosy, homely

character, with small forecourts. I have a kind of idea that Whistler's house was No. 12, but this is quite uncertain to me.* As my brother and I were much in that neighbourhood, to and fro, prior to settling down in No. 16 Cheyne Walk, we came into contact with Whistler, who every now and then accompanied us on our jaunts. I forget how it was exactly that we got introduced to him; possibly by Mr. Algernon Swinburne, who was also to be an inmate of No. 16. Either (as I think) before meeting Whistler or just about the time we met him, we had seen one or two of his paintings. *At the Piano* must have been one, and we most heartily admired him, and discerned unmistakably that he was destined for renown."

The friendship may have led to Whistler's interest in black-and-white, for in England it was Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood who revolutionised illustration and proved it a dignified and serious form of art. The more brilliant of the younger men were working for the illustrated magazines, and Whistler found a place among them. He made six drawings in 1862. Four appeared in *Once a Week: The Morning before the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, Count Burckhardt, The Major's Daughter, The Relief Fund in Lancashire*, intended to be used as an illustration to the reprint of an address by Tennyson on the subject of the famine in Lancashire, but never written because of his illness. To this fund we believe Whistler contributed a drawing. The two other illustrations, for *The First Sermon*, were published in *Good Words*. They were drawn on wood in pencil, pen and wash, are full of character, and, in the use of line, are like his etchings. They were engraved by the Dalziel Brothers and Joseph Swain, and from Mr. Strahan, the publisher of *Once a Week*, we have these additional facts:

"They were arranged for by Edward Dalziel, and I cannot say how he came to know the artist or his work, as Mr. Whistler was young then, and, as far as I know, had not contributed to any magazine.

* Not only have the houses been much altered, but the name of the street has changed, and Queen's Road is now Royal Hospital Road. The present No. 12 corresponds to Mr. Rossetti's description, but we think it more likely —and he does too—that Whistler lived in one of the little brick cottages of Paradise Row. In any case, we doubt if he had more than rooms or lodgings. He gave us to understand that the house he took shortly after, in Lindsey Row, was his first in London.

The average price we paid to artists was nine pounds, and we reckoned that the same amount had to be paid for engravings. As a matter of fact, the sum paid to Mr. Whistler was nine pounds for each drawing."

We showed Whistler once *The Morning before the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.* "Well, now, not bad, you know—not bad even then!" and he followed, with his expressive little finger, the flowing line, pointing to the hand lost in the draperies. This and *The Major's Daughter* were the two he preferred, and when J. was preparing *The History of Modern Illustration* Whistler picked them out as "very pretty ones" that should be reproduced, though, if but a single example of his work could be used, he wished *The Morning before the Massacre* to be selected, for it was "as delicate as an etching, and altogether characteristic and personal." *Count Burckhardt* he did not care for, insisting that he would rather not be represented if this were to be the only example in the book. "It was never a favourite," he added.

The four drawings of *Once a Week* were reprinted in Thornbury's *Legendary Ballads*, 1876. Thornbury implied that the drawings were made for the book, and thought that "the startling drawings by Mr. Whistler prove his singular power of hand, strong artistic feeling, and daring manner."

Our copy belonged to George Augustus Sala. On the margin of *The Morning before the Massacre* he wrote: "Jemmy Whistler.—Clever, sketchy, and incomplete, like everything he has done. A loaf of excellent, fine flour, but slack-baked." So Sala believed in 1883, and it is typical of the time.

Another important work of 1862 was *The Last of Old Westminster.* Mr. Arthur Severn knows more about it than anyone, as his account to us explains: "On my return from Rome to join my brother in his rooms in Manchester Buildings, on the Thames at Westminster Bridge (where the New Scotland Yard now is), I found Whistler beginning his picture of Westminster Bridge. My brother had given him permission to use our sitting-room, with its bow-windows looking over the river and towards the bridge. He was always courteous and pleasant in manner, and it was interesting to see him at work. The bridge was in perspective, still surrounded with piles, for it had only just been finished. It was the piles with their rich colour and delightful confusion that took his fancy, not the bridge, which hardly showed. He would look steadily

at a pile for some time, then mix up the colour, then, holding his brush quite at the end, with no mahlstick, make a downward stroke and the pile was done. I remember his looking very carefully at a hansom cab that had pulled up for some purpose on the bridge, and in a few strokes he got the look of it perfectly. He was long over the picture, sometimes coming only once a week, and we got rather tired of it. One day some friends came to see it. He stood it against a table in an upright position for them to see; it suddenly fell on its face, to my brother's disgust, as he had just got a new carpet. Luckily Whistler's sky was pretty dry, and I don't think the picture got any damage, and the artist was most good-natured about my brother's anxiety lest the carpet should have suffered."

The Last of Old Westminster was ready for the Academy of 1863, to which it was sent with six prints: *Weary*, *Old Westminster Bridge*, *Hungerford Bridge*, *Monsieur Becquet*, *The Forge*, *The Pool*. The dignity of composition in the picture and the vigour of handling impressed all who saw it in the London Memorial Exhibition, though they had to regret its shocking condition, cracked from end to end. It failed to impress Academicians in 1863, and was badly hung, as were the prints, reproductive work being then, as now, preferred to original etching.

The White Girl, after its Berners Street success, was sent by Whistler to the *Salon*. He took it to Paris, to Fantin's studio, there having it unrolled and framed. It is hard to say why the strongest work of the strongest young men was rejected from the *Salon* of 1863. Fantin, Legros, Manet, Bracquemond, Jongkind, Harpignies, Cazin, Jean-Paul Laurens, Vollon, Whistler were refused. It was a scandal; 1859 was nothing to it. The town was in an uproar that reached the ears of the Emperor. Martinet, the dealer, offered to show the rejected pictures in his gallery. But before this was arranged, Napoleon III ordered that a *Salon des Refusés* should be held in the same building as the official *Salon*, the *Palais de l'Industrie*. The decree was published in the *Moniteur* for April 24, 1863. The notice was issued by the *Directeur-Général* of the Imperial Museums, and the exhibition opened on May 15. The success was as great as the scandal. The exhibition was the talk of the town, it was caricatured as the *Exposition des Comiques*, and parodied as the *Club des Refusés* at the *Variétés*; everyone rushed to the galleries. The rooms were crowded by artists, be-

cause, in the midst of much no doubt weak and foolish, the best work of the day was shown ; by the public, because of the stir the affair made. The public laughed with the idea that it was a duty to laugh, and because the critics said that never was *succès pour rire* better deserved. Zola described in *L'Œuvre* the gaiety and cruelty of the crowd, convulsed and hysterical in front of *La Dame en Blanc*. Hamerton wrote in the *Fine Arts Quarterly :*

" The hangers must have thought her particularly ugly, for they have given her a sort of place of honour, before an opening through which all pass, so that nobody misses her. I watched several parties, to see the impression *The Woman in White* made on them. They all stopped instantly, struck with amazement. This for two or three seconds, then they always looked at each other and laughed. Here, for once, I have the happiness to be quite of the popular way of thinking."

On the other hand, Fernand Desnoyers, who wrote a pamphlet on the *Salon des Refusés*, thought that Whistler was " *le plus spirite des peintres*," and the painting the most original that had passed before the jury of the *Salon*, altogether remarkable, at once simple and fantastic, the portrait of a spirit, a medium, though of a beauty so peculiar that the public did not know whether to think it beautiful or ugly. Paul Mantz considered it the most important picture in the exhibition, full of knowledge and strange charm, and his article in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* is the more interesting because he described the picture as a *Symphonie du Blanc* some years before Whistler called it so, and pointed out that it carried on French tradition, for, a hundred years earlier, painters had shown in the *Salon* studies of white upon white.

The picture hardly explained the sensation of its first appearance when we saw it with *Miss Alexander*, the *Mother*, *Carlyle*, *The Fur Jacket*, and *Irving* in the London Memorial Exhibition. But it seemed revolutionary enough in the sixties, to become the *clou* of the *Salon des Refusés*, though nothing was further from Whistler's intention. It eclipsed Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, then called *Le Bain*.

Whistler was in Amsterdam with Legros, looking at Rembrandt with delight, at Van der Helst with disappointment, etching *Amsterdam from the Tolhuis*, no doubt hunting for old paper and adding to his collection of blue and white, when the news came of the reception of

his picture in Paris, and he wrote to Fantin that he longed to be there and in the movement. It was a satisfaction that the picture, slighted in London, should be honoured in Paris. He was all impatience to know what was said in the *Café de Bade*, the *café* of Manet, and by the critics.

To add to his triumph in Paris, official honours were coming to him in Holland and England. Some of his etchings were in an exhibition at The Hague, though he said he did not know how they got there, and he was given one of three gold medals awarded to foreigners—his first medal. Though atrociously hung at the Academy, his prints were honoured at the British Museum, where twelve were bought for the Print Room this year.

The excitement did not keep him from work, to which, as he wrote to Fantin, wandering was a drawback. He felt the need of his studio, of "the familiar all about him." The "familiar" he loved best was in London, and when he returned he began to look for a house of his own. It was fortunate for him that his mother was in England. At the beginning of the Civil War, in which Whistler took the keenest interest as a patriot and a "West Point man," she had been in Richmond with her son William, serving as surgeon in the Confederate Army, had run the blockade, and come to join her other children in London.

Whistler no longer made the Hadens' house his home. The relations of the brothers-in-law had become strained, both being of strong character. Haden had had much to put up with, while Whistler, the artist, resented the criticism of Haden, the surgeon. One story we have from Whistler explains the situation, and though he never gave a date, it can be told here. Haden was the schoolmaster Whistler found him when they first met; one's older relatives have a way of forgetting one can grow up. Once, when Whistler had done something more enormous than ever in Haden's eyes, he was summoned to the workroom upstairs, and lectured until he refused to listen to another word. He started down the four flights of stairs, with Haden close behind, still lecturing. At last the front door was reached. And then: "Oh, dear," said Whistler, "I've left my hat upstairs, and now we have got to go all through this again!" As there was no further question of Whistler living with the Hadens, it was decided that he and his mother should live together, and some of his most delightful years were those that followed.

CHAPTER X: CHELSEA DAYS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SIXTY-THREE TO EIGHTEEN SIXTY-SIX.

Whistler's first house in London was No. 7 Lindsey Row, Chelsea, now 101 Cheyne Walk. It adjoins the old palace of Lord Lindsey, which still stands, the original building divided into several houses, stuccoed and modernised, much of its stateliness gone, though the spacious stairway and part of the panelling have been preserved. Whistler's was a three-storey house, with a garden in front, humble compared with the palaces Academicians were building. "All these artists complain of nothing but the too great prosperity of the profession in these days," Hamerton wrote to his wife; "they tell me an artist's life is a princely one now." But Whistler lived his own life, and from his windows he could paint what he wanted. Only the road separated the house from the river; opposite was Battersea Church and a group of factory chimneys; old Battersea Bridge stretched across, and at night he could see the lights of Cremorne.

At the end of the Row the boat-builder Greaves lived. He had worked in Chelsea for years. He had rowed Turner about on the river, and his two sons were to row Whistler. One of the sons, Mr. Walter Greaves, has told us that Mrs. Booth, a big, hard, coarse Scotchwoman, was always with Turner when he came for a boat. Turner would ask Greaves what kind of a day it was going to be, and if Greaves answered "Fine," he would get Greaves to row them across to Battersea Church, or to the fields, now Battersea Park. If Greaves was doubtful Turner would say: "Well, Mrs. Booth, we won't go far," and afterwards for the sons—boys at the time—Turner in their memory was overshadowed by her. They had also known Martin, the painter of big Scriptural *machines*, whose house was in the middle of the Row. It had a balcony, and on fine moonlight nights, or nights of dramatic skies, Greaves or one of the sons would knock him up, and keep on knocking until they saw the old man in his nightcap on the balcony, where he would get to work and sketch the sky until daylight. Greaves remembered, too, Brunel, who built the *Great Eastern*, living at the end of the Row. Of other associations, dating a couple of centuries before, the little Moravian graveyard at the back was a reminder,

THE WHITE GIRL

SYMPHONY IN WHITE. NO. I

OIL

In the possession of J. H. Whittemore, Esq.

(*See page 67*)

JO

DRY-POINT. G. 77

(*See page* 68)

for Lindsey Palace was one of the first refuges of Zinzendorf and the Brotherhood. A hundred years or so later Mrs. Gaskell was born there. The Row, indeed, was a place of history. But Whistler was to make it more famous.

The two Greaves, Walter and Harry, painted, and Whistler let them work with and for him. We have often heard him speak of them as his pupils. From them he learned to row. "He taught us to paint, and we taught him the waterman's jerk," Mr. Walter Greaves says. Whistler would start with them in the twilight, Albert Moore sometimes his companion, and they would stay on the river for hours, often all night, lingering in the lights of Cremorne, drifting into the shadows of the bridge. Or else he was up with the dawn, throwing pebbles at their windows to wake them and make them come and pull him up or down stream. At night, on the river and at Cremorne, he was never without brown paper and black and white chalk, with which he made his notes for the Nocturnes and the seemingly simple, but really complicated, firework pictures. In the Gardens it was easy to put down what he wanted under the lamps. On the river he had to trust to his memory, only noting the reflections in white chalk.

Walter Greaves, in his exhibition of 1911, made the statement, or allowed it to be made, that before he and his brother knew Whistler, they were "painting pictures of the Thames and Cremorne Gardens, both day and night effects." This statement Mr. Greaves was unable to substantiate by dates and facts, and as other dates and facts given in his catalogue were wrong, little reliance can be placed upon it. He and his brother were Whistler's pupils, and they worked for Whistler for many years, helping him, at any rate until after The Peacock Room. Whistler naturally wished to control his pupils in their work as any other master would, as he controlled and directed the work of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Addams, his last pupils. He also did his best to prevent Mr. Walter Greaves and his brother from appropriating his subjects, which letters from Whistler to Greaves prove was exactly what they were doing. They were to carry on his tradition, and this included his methods and even at times his colours which they used, while Whistler as undoubtedly worked on their canvases and plates as he worked on those of other pupils at later dates. But the statement that he refused to allow them to exhibit is untrue, for on the few occasions when we

are able to find that Greaves did exhibit, it was because Whistler, in his generosity, got the pictures hung. In his recent exhibition Greaves showed a painting called *Passing under Old Battersea Bridge*, signed and dated 1862, and he stated that he had exhibited it in the International Exhibition at South Kensington of that year. No other picture we have seen by him has any such date or signature on it, and his statement that it was in the International Exhibition of 1862 has been proved false. It is now admitted that he did not show until 1873. There are two distinct qualities of work in the picture which must be the work either of two people or of two periods. The piers of the bridge are hard and tight, the background resembles Whistler's work of years later, for neither Whistler nor Greaves had painted a Nocturne in that manner at the time. Nevertheless, these misstatements of Greaves were used by critics all over the world to belittle Whistler.

At one time, master and pupils attended a life class held in the evening by M. Barthe, a Frenchman, in Limerston Street, not far from the Row. Mr. J. E. Christie was another student, and from him we have the following account:

"Whistler was not a regular attender, but came occasionally, and always accompanied by two young men—brothers—Greaves by name. They simply adored Whistler, and were not unlike him in appearance, owing to an unconscious imitation of his dress and manner. It was amusing to watch the movements of the trio when they came into the studio (always late). The curtain that hung in front of the door would suddenly be pulled back by one of the Greaves, and a trim, prim little man, with a bright, merry eye, would step in with 'Good evening,' cheerfully said to the whole studio. After a second's survey, while taking off his gloves, he would hand his hat to the other brother, who hung it up carefully as if it were a sacred thing, then he would wipe his brow and moustache with a spotless handkerchief, then in the most careful way he arranged his materials, and sat down. Then, having imitated in a general way the preliminaries, the two Greaves sat down on either side of him. There was a sort of tacit understanding that his and their studies should not be subjected to our rude gaze. I, however, saw, with the tail of my eye, as it were, that Whistler made small drawings on brown paper with coloured chalks, that the figure (always a

female figure) would be about four inches long, that the drawing was bold and fine, and not slavishly like the model. The comical part was that his satellites didn't draw from the model at all, that I saw, but sat looking at Whistler's drawing and copying that as far as they could. He never entered into the conversation, which was unceasing, but occasionally rolled a cigarette and had a few whiffs, the Greaves brothers always requiring their whiffs at the same time. The trio packed up, and left before the others always."

Sometimes in the evening Whistler, with his mother, would go to the Greaves' house after dinner, and work there. Often he sent in dessert, that they might enjoy and talk over it together. Then he would bring out his brown paper and chalks and make studies of the family and of himself, or sketches of pictures he had seen, working until midnight and after. In those days he never went to bed until he had drawn a portrait of himself, he told us. Many of the portraits are in existence. The sister was an accomplished musician, and Whistler delighted in music, though he was not critical, for he was known to call the passing hurdy-gurdy into his front garden, and have it ground under his windows. Occasionally the brothers played so that Whistler might dance. He was always full of drolleries and fun. He would imitate a man sawing, or two men fighting at the door so cleverly that Mrs. Greaves never ceased to be astonished when he walked into the room alone and unhurt. He delighted in American mechanical toys, and his house was full of Japanese dolls. One great doll, dressed like a man, he would take with him not only to the Greaves', but to dinners at Little Holland House, where the Prinseps then lived, and to other houses, where he put it through amazing performances.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti was, by this time, settled in Tudor House (now Queen's House), not far from Lindsey Row, and Swinburne and George Meredith were living with him. Mr. W. M. Rossetti came for two or three nights every week, and Frederick Sandys, Charles Augustus Howell, William Bell Scott, and, several years later, Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton were constant visitors.

For Rossetti Whistler had a genuine affection, and, in his early enthusiasm, wrote of him as "*une grand artiste*" to Fantin. But later his enthusiasm did not blind him. "A charming fellow, the only white man in all that crowd of painters," he assured us; "not an artist,

you know, but charming and a gentleman." Mr. Watts-Dunton says that Rossetti got tired of Whistler after awhile, and considered him a brainless fellow, who had no more than a malicious quick wit at the expense of others, and no genuine philosophy or humour. But Whistler never realised any change in Rossetti's feelings towards him.

It was inevitable that Whistler and Rossetti should disagree in matters of art. Whistler asked Rossetti why he did not frame his sonnets. Rossetti thought that the "new French School," in which Whistler had been trained, was "simply putrescence and decomposition." It is said that Rossetti influenced Whistler. Whistler influenced him as much. They influenced each other in the choice of models, in a certain luxuriance of type and the manner of presenting it, an influence which was superficial and transitory.

Upon many other subjects they agreed. Rossetti shared Whistler's delight in drollery and his love of the fantastic. No one understood better than Whistler why Rossetti filled his house and garden with strange beasts. It was from Whistler we heard of the peacock and the gazelle, who fought until the peacock was left standing desolate, with his tail strewed upon the ground. From Whistler, too, we had the story of the bull of Bashan, bought at Cremorne, and tied to a stake in the garden, and Rossetti would come every day and talk to him, until once the bull got so excited that he pulled up the stake and made for Rossetti, who went tearing round and round a tree, a little fat person with coat-tails flying, finally, by a supreme effort, rushing up the garden steps just in time to slam the door in the bull's face. Rossetti called his man and ordered him to tie up the bull, but the man, who had looked out for the menagerie, who had gone about the house with peacocks and other creatures under his arms, who had rescued armadilloes from irate neighbours, who had captured monkeys from the tops of chimneys, struck when it came to tying up a bull of Bashan on the rampage, and gave a month's warning. From Whistler also we first had the story of the wombat, bought at Jamrach's by Rossetti for its name. Whistler was dining at Tudor House, and the wombat was brought on the table with coffee and cigars, while Meredith talked brilliantly, and Swinburne read aloud passages from the *Leaves of Grass*. But Meredith was witty as well as brilliant, and the special target of his wit was Rossetti, who, as he had invited two or three of his patrons,

did not appreciate the jest. The evening ended less amiably than it began, and no one thought of the wombat until late, and then it had disappeared. It was searched for high and low. Days passed, weeks passed, months passed, and there was no wombat. It was regretted, forgotten. Long afterwards Rossetti, who was not much of a smoker, got out the box of cigars he had not touched since that dinner. He opened it. Not a cigar was left, but there was the skeleton of the wombat.

Whistler and Rossetti also agreed about many of the group who met at Tudor House, though eventually Whistler felt what appeared to him the disloyalty of Swinburne and Burne-Jones. He was never, at any time, so intimate with Burne-Jones as with Swinburne, who often came to the house in Lindsey Row, not only for Whistler's sake, but out of affection for Whistler's mother. Miss Chapman tells us that Swinburne was once taken ill there suddenly, and Mrs. Whistler nursed him till he was well. Miss Chapman also remembers Swinburne sitting at Mrs. Whistler's feet, and saying to her: "Mrs. Whistler, what has happened? It used to be Algernon!" Mrs. Whistler, who had accepted Whistler's friends and their ways, said quietly, "You have not been to see us for a long while, you know. If you come as you did, it will be Algernon again." And he came, and the friendship lasted until the eighties, when he published the article in the *Fortnightly Review* which Whistler could not forgive.

Meredith wrote us of these Chelsea days: "I knew Whistler and never had a dissension with him, though merry bouts between us were frequent. When I went to live in the country, we rarely met. He came down to stay with me once. He was a lively companion, never going out of his way to take offence, but with the springs in him prompt for the challenge. His tales of his student life in Paris, and of one Ernest, with whom he set forth on a holiday journey with next to nothing in his purse, were *impayable*."

Quarrels and distrust never made Whistler deny the charm of Charles Augustus Howell, remembered for the part he played in the lives of some of the most distinguished people of his generation. Who he was, where he came from, nobody knew. He was supposed to be associated with high, but nameless, personages in Portugal, and sent by them on a secret mission to England: he was said to

have been involved in the Orsini conspiracy, and obliged to fly for his life across the Channel. According to Mr. E. T. Cook, he was descended from Boabdil il Chico, though Rossetti called him "the cheeky." Mr. Cook says that in his youth, as he used to tell, he had supported his family by diving for treasure, and had lived in Morocco as the Sheik of a Tribe. But Ford Madox Brown described him as the Münchausen of the Pre-Raphaelite circle. The unquestionable fact is that he was a man of great personal charm and unusual business capacity. Mr. W. M. Rossetti has written of him: "As a salesman—with his open manner, winning address, and his exhaustless gift of amusing talk, not innocent of high colouring and of actual *blague*—Howell was unsurpassable."

He was secretary to Ruskin; he was Rossetti's man of affairs; he became Whistler's, though on a less definite basis. He appears in published reminiscences as the magnificent prototype of the author's agent. His talk was one of his recommendations to both Rossetti and Whistler. Rossetti rejoiced in Howell's "Niagara of lies," and immortalised them:

"There's a Portuguese person called Howell,
Who lays on his lies with a trowel;
When I goggle my eyes,
And start with surprise,
'Tis at the monstrous big lies told by Howell."

Whistler described him as "the wonderful man, the genius, the Gil Blas-Robinson Crusoe hero out of his proper time, the creature of top-boots and plumes, splendidly flamboyant, the real hero of the Picaresque novel, forced by modern conditions into other adventures, and along other roads."

Whistler gave Howell credit for more than picturesqueness. He had the instinct for beautiful things, Whistler said: "He knew them and made himself indispensable by knowing them. He was of the greatest service to Rossetti; he helped Watts to sell his pictures and raise his prices; he acted as artistic adviser to Mr. Howard, Lord Carlisle. He had the gift of intimacy; he was at once a friend, on closest terms of confidence. He introduced everybody to every-

body else, he entangled everybody with everybody else, and it was easier to get involved with Howell than to get rid of him."

Many years passed before there was any wish on Whistler's part to get rid of him. He was soon as frequent a visitor at Lindsey Row as at Tudor House. For a time he lived at Putney, and Whistler used to take his morning pull up the river to breakfast with him. Of none of the Rossetti group did Whistler so often talk to us as of Howell, telling us his adventures—adventures in pursuit of old furniture and china until he was known to, and loved and hated by, every pawnbroker in London, and seemed to spend all his time with rare and beautiful things; adventures with creditors and bailiffs: once his collection of blue pots saved by a device only Howell could have invented, forty blue pots carried off in forty four-wheelers to the law-courts, where he was complimented by the judge and awarded heavy damages by the jury; adventures as vestryman, giving teas to hundreds of school-children; adventures at Selsea Bill, where three cottages were turned into a house for himself and he swaggered in the village as a great personage, finding an occupation in stripping the copper from an old wreck that had been there for years and possibly selling it to etchers; adventures ending eventually in *The Paddon Papers*, of which there will be something to say when the date of their publication is reached.

Frederick Sandys' work never interested Whistler, but Sandys the man was a delight to him, though the two lost sight of each other for many years. Sandys was usually without a penny in his pocket, but he faced the situation with calm and swagger. Accidents never separated him from his white waistcoat, though he might have to carry it himself to the laundry, or get his model, "the little girl" he called her, to carry it for him. You were always meeting them with the brown-paper parcel, Whistler said, and at the nearest friend's house he would stop for five minutes and emerge from it splendid in a clean waistcoat. In money matters he reckoned like a Rothschild. It was always, "Huh! five hundred," that he wanted. Late one afternoon, as Whistler was going into Rossetti's, he met Sandys coming out unusually depressed. He stopped Whistler:

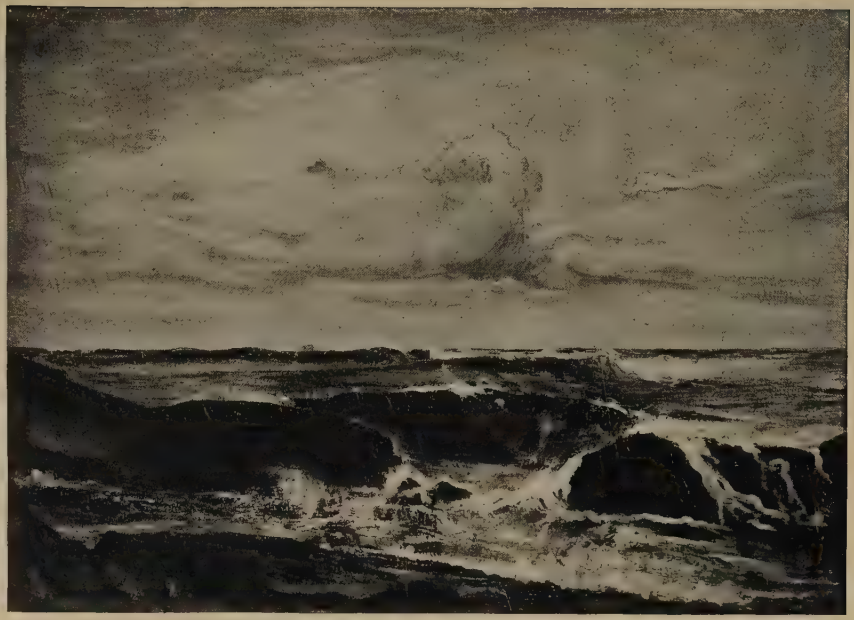
"Do, do try and reason with Gabriel, huh! He is most thoughtless. He says I must go to America, and I must have five hundred, huh, and go! But, if I could go, huh, I could stay!"

Once Whistler, Sandys, and Rossetti are said to have gone to Winchelsea with W. G. Wills, Irving, and Alfred Calmour, from whom the story comes. Whistler and Rossetti wanted to see a beautiful old house. A grumpy old man lived in it, but Irving warned them that he would probably ask them all to dinner. Rossetti said they must refuse, he hated dining with strangers; Whistler was sure the wine would be bad, Sandys as certain they would be bored by infernal chatter. But they went to the house. Whistler knocked. The servant opened. Whistler asked him to tell his master that "Mr. Whistler and Mr. Rossetti and Mr. Irving wish to see the place." A rough voice was heard: "Shut the door, Roger, I don't want these damned show people stealing my silver." Whistler and Rossetti were furious, and thought they should demand an apology. "He thinks we are confounded actors," Whistler said. "My dear James, he's never heard of *you!*" was Irving's comment. The only drawback to the story is that we doubt if Whistler knew Irving until after he had ceased to see anything of Rossetti and Sandys.

Whistler got to know other friends of Rossetti's, and he drifted to Ford Madox Brown's, in Fitzroy Square: "Once in a long while I would take my gaiety, my sunniness, to Madox Brown's receptions. And there were always the most wonderful people—the Blinds, Swinburne, anarchists, poets and musicians, all kinds and sorts, and, in an inner room, Rossetti and Mrs. Morris sitting side by side in state, being worshipped, and, fluttering round them, Howell with a broad red ribbon across his shirt-front, a Portuguese decoration hereditary in the family."

According to his grandson, Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, Ford Madox Brown thought so much of Whistler's work that once, knowing Whistler wanted money, he sent round among his friends a circular praising Whistler's etchings and urging their purchase.

Whistler shared Rossetti's interest in the spiritual manifestations that, for several years, agitated the circle at Tudor House. He told us once of the strange things that happened when he went to *séances* at Rossetti's with Jo, and also when he and Jo tried the same things in his studio, and a cousin from the South, long dead, talked to him and told him much that no one else could have known. He believed, but he gave up the *séances* when they threatened to become engrossing,



THE BLUE WAVE

OIL

In the possession of A. A. Pope, Esq.

(*See page* 68)

THE FORGE

DRY-POINT. G. 68

(*See page 67*)

for he felt that he would be obliged to sacrifice to them the work he had to do in the world.

The chief bond between Whistler and Rossetti was their love for blue and white and Japanese prints. Whistler was in Paris in 1856, when Bracquemond " discovered " Japan in a little volume of Hokusai used for packing china, and rescued by Delâtre, the printer. It passed into the hands of Laveille, the engraver, and from him Bracquemond obtained it. After that, Bracquemond had the book always by him ; and when in 1862 Madame Desoye, who, with her husband, had lived in Japan, opened a shop under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, the enthusiasm spread to Manet, Fantin, Tissot, Jacquemart and Solon, Baudelaire and the De Goncourts. Rossetti was supposed to have made it the fashion. But the fashion in Paris began before Rossetti owned his first blue pot or his first colour-print. Whistler brought the knowledge and the love of the art to London. " It was he who invented blue and white in London," Mr. Murray Marks assured us, and Mr. W. M. Rossetti was as certain that his brother was inspired by Whistler, who bought not only blue and white, but sketch-books, colour-prints, lacquers, kakemonos, embroideries, screens. " In his house in Chelsea, facing Battersea Bridge," Mr. Severn writes, " he had lovely blue and white, Chinese and Japanese." The only decorations, except the harmony of colour, were the prints on the walls, a flight of Japanese fans in one place, in another shelves of blue and white. People, copying him, stuck up fans anywhere, and hung plates from wires. Whistler's fans were arranged for colour and line. His decorations bewildered people even more than the work of the new firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. The Victorian artist covered his walls with tapestry, filled his studio with costly things, and made the public measure beauty by price, a fact overlooked by Whistler, but never by Morris.

Rossetti joined in the hunt for blue and white. Henry Treffy Dunn, in his *Recollections of Rossetti*, whose assistant he was, writes that Rossetti and Whistler " each tried to outwit the other in picking up the choicest pieces of blue to be met with " ; that both were for ever hunting for " Long Elizas," a name in which Mr. W. M. Rossetti thought " possibly a witticism of Whistler's may be detected." Howell rushed in and met with the most astounding experiences and adventures. A

little shop in the Strand was one of their favourite haunts, another was near London Bridge where a Japanese print was given away with a pound of tea. Farmer and Rogers had an Oriental warehouse in Regent Street. The manager, Mr. Lazenby Liberty, afterwards opened one on the other side of the street, and here, too, Whistler went, introduced to Mr. Liberty by Rossetti. Mr. Liberty rendered him many a service, and visited him to the last. Mr. Murray Marks imported blue and white, and he has told us how the fever spread from Whistler and Rossetti to the ever-anxious collector. Rossetti asked Mr. Marks if he knew anything about blue and white. Mr. Marks said yes; he could get Rossetti a shipload if he chose. Mr. Marks often ran over to Holland, where blue and white was common and cheap, and he picked up a lot, offering it to Rossetti for fifty pounds. Rossetti happened to be hard up and could not afford it. But he came with Mr. Huth, who bought as much as Rossetti could not take, and the rage for it began in England, Sir Henry Thompson, among others, commencing to collect. The rivalry between Whistler and Rossetti lasted for several years, until Rossetti, ill and broken, hardly saw his friends, and until Mr. Marks, in the early seventies, bought back from Whistler and Rossetti all he had sold them.

CHAPTER XI: CHELSEA DAYS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SIXTY-THREE TO EIGHTEEN SIXTY-SIX CONTINUED.

In Whistler's correspondence with Fantin between 1860 and 1865, published in part by M. Bénédite in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (1905), it can be seen that he was outgrowing the influence of Courbet, and that his reaction against realism was bitter. In his revolt he deliberately built up subjects that had nothing to do with life as he knew it, and he borrowed the motives from Japan.

It was in the studio at No. 7 Lindsey Row—no huge, gorgeous, tapestry-hung, *bric-à-brac* crowded hall, but a little second storey, or English first floor, back room—that the Japanese pictures were painted. The method was a development of his earlier work. The difference was in the subjects. He did not conceal his "machinery." *The Lange Leizen*, *The Gold Screen*, *The Balcony*, the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* were endeavours to render a beauty he had discovered

which was unknown in Western life. There was no attempt at the "learning" of Tadema or the "morality" of Holman Hunt. Whistler's models were not Japanese. The lady of *The Lange Leizen* sits on a chair as she never would have sat in the land from which her costume came, and the pots and trays and flowers around her are in a profusion never seen in the houses of Tokio or Canton. In *The Gold Screen* pose and arrangement are equally inappropriate. The *Princesse*, in her trailing robes, is as little Japanese. When he left the studio and took his canvas to the front of the house and painted *The Balcony*, though he clothed the English models in Eastern dress and gave them Eastern instruments to play upon, and placed them before Japanese screens and Anglo-Japanese railings, their background was the Thames with the chimneys of Battersea. We have heard of a Chinese bamboo rack he used for these railings, though some remember it as a studio property made from his design. Nothing save the beauty of the detail mattered to Whistler. It was not the real Japan he wanted to paint, but his idea of it, just as Rembrandt painted his idea of the Holy Land.

The titles he afterwards found for these pictures are *Purple and Rose*, *Caprice in Purple and Gold*, *Harmony in Flesh Colour and Green*, *Rose and Silver*. Harmony was what he sought, though no Dutchman surpassed their delicacy of detail, truth of texture, intricacy of pattern. And yet we are conscious in them of artificial structure as in none of his other work; the models do not live in their Japanese draperies; Eastern detail is out of place on the banks of the Thames; the device is too obvious.

The *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* is the portrait of Miss Christine Spartali, daughter of the Greek Consul-General in London, whom Whistler met at Ionides', and to whose dinners and parties he often went. There were two daughters, Christine (Countess Edmond de Cahen) and Marie (Mrs. W. J. Stillman), both beautiful. Whistler and Rossetti were struck by their beauty, and Whistler asked the younger sister, Christine, to sit to him. Mrs. Stillman, who always accompanied her, has told us the story of the picture. Before they came to the studio Whistler had his scheme prepared. The Japanese robe was ready, the rug and screen were in place, and he posed her at once. There are a number of small studies and sketches

in oil and pastel that show he knew what he wanted. She sat twice a week during the winter of 1863–64. At first the work went quickly, then it began to drag. Whistler often rubbed it out just as she thought it finished, and day after day she returned to find that everything was to be done over again. The parents got tired, but not the two girls. Mrs. Stillman remembers that Whistler partly closed the shutters so as to shut out the direct light; that her sister stood at one end of the room, the canvas beside her; that Whistler would look at the picture from a distance, then dash at it, give one stroke, then dash away again. As a rule, they arrived about half-past ten or a quarter to eleven; he painted steadily, forgetting everything else, and it was often long after two before they lunched. When lunch was served, it was brought into the studio, placed on a low table, and they sat on stools. There were no such lunches anywhere. Mrs. Whistler provided American dishes, strange in London; among other things, raw tomatoes, a surprise to the Greek girls, who had never eaten tomatoes except over-cooked as the Greeks liked them, and canned apricots and cream, which they had never eaten at all. One *menu* was roast pheasants, followed by tomato salad, and the apricots and cream, usually with champagne. One cannot wonder that there were occasional deficits in the bank account at Lindsey Row. But it was not only the things to eat and drink that made the hour a delight. Whistler, silent when he worked, was gay at lunch. Perhaps better than his charm, Mrs. Stillman remembers his devotion to his mother, who was calm and dignified, with something of the sweet peacefulness of the Friends. After lunch work was renewed, and it was four and later before they were released.

The sittings went on until the sitter fell ill. Whistler was pitiless with his models. The head in the *Princesse* gave him most trouble. He kept Miss Spartali standing while he worked at it, never letting her rest; she must keep the entire pose, and she would not admit her fatigue as long as she could help it. During her illness a model stood for the gown, and when she was getting better he came one day and made a pencil drawing of her head, though what became of it Mrs. Stillman never knew. There were a few sittings after this, and at last the picture was finished. The two girls wanted their father to buy it, but Mr. Spartali did not like it. He objected to it as a portrait

of his daughter. Appreciation of art was not among the virtues of the London Greeks. Alexander Ionides and his sons were almost alone in preferring a good thing.

Rossetti, glad to be of service, tried to sell the picture. Whistler agreed to take a hundred pounds, and Rossetti placed the canvas in his studio, where it would be seen by a collector who was coming to look at his work. The collector came, saw the *Princesse*, liked it, wanted it. There was one objection: Whistler's signature in big letters across the canvas. If Whistler would change the signature he would take the picture. Rossetti, enchanted, hurried to tell Whistler. Whistler was indignant. The request showed what manner of man the patron was, one in whose possession he did not care to have any work of his. However, Rossetti sold the *Princesse* to another collector, who died shortly afterwards, and then it was bought by Frederick Leyland, and so led to the decoration of The Peacock Room.

It is possible that this objection helped Whistler to realise the inharmonious effect of a large signature on a picture. It is sure that, about this time, he began to arrange his initials somewhat after the Japanese fashion. They were first interlaced in an oblong or circular frame like the signatures of Japanese artists. He signed his name to the earliest pictures, even to some of the Japanese. But with the Nocturnes and the large portraits the Butterfly appeared, made from working the letters J. M. W. into a design, which became more fantastic until it evolved into the Butterfly in silhouette, and continued in various forms. In the *Carlyle* the Butterfly is enclosed in a round frame, like a cut-out silhouette, behind the figure, and repeats the prints on the wall. In the *Miss Alexander* it is in a large semicircle and is far more distinctly a butterfly. Then it grew like a stencil, though in no sense was it one, as may be seen in M. Duret's portrait, where the Butterfly is made simply in silhouette, on the background, by a few touches of the rose of the opera cloak and the fan. It was introduced as a note of colour, as important in the picture as any other detail, and at times it was put in almost at the first painting to judge the effect, scraped out with the whole thing, put in again somewhere else, this repeated until he got it right. We have seen many an unfinished picture with a wonderfully finished Butterfly, because it was just where Whistler wanted it.

The same development can be traced in his etchings, in which it began to appear as a bit of decoration. He originally signed the prints, and signed the plates with his name and date bitten in. But later the prints were signed with the Butterfly, followed by "*imp*," while the Butterfly alone was etched on the copper or drawn on the stone. Then he added the Butterfly to his signature to letters and his dedication on prints. And the Butterfly found its way to his invitation cards, and at last his correspondence, public and private, was usually signed with the Butterfly alone. This was elaborated ingeniously in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, the Butterfly not only decorating, but punctuating the paragraphs. Rumour says that Whistler went so far as to sign his cheques with the Butterfly, and that once, having signed a cheque for thirty-two francs in this manner, the man to whom it was paid demanded a more conventional signature. Whistler, provoked by the suggestion of doubt, wrote his name, knowing the bank would not then accept it, and was more provoked when he found the rare autograph had been sold within a day for eleven hundred and fifty francs. But rumour is probably wrong: on all the formal letters and documents we have seen, his name, and not the Butterfly, is used.

On the frames of early pictures Japanese patterns were painted in red or blue on the flat gold, and a Butterfly placed on them, in relation to the picture. He designed the frames, and they were carried out by the Greaves, who also copied his designs at Streatham Town Hall, which they decorated thirty years later. Shortly before his death, a few were done by his stepson, E. Godwin. The *Sarasate*, in Pittsburg, is an excellent example, and so is the *Battersea Bridge* at the Tate Gallery. Whistler applied a similar scheme to his etchings, water-colours, and pastels, reddish or bluish lines, and at times the Butterfly, appearing on the white or gold of their frames. Certain people want to make out that Whistler got the idea from Rossetti. It might as well be said that Rossetti got it from the beginning of the world. There is nothing new in the idea. Artists always have decorated special frames for special pictures, and Whistler only carried on tradition when he designed frames in harmony with his work and varied them according to the pictures for which they were used. In after years he gave up almost entirely these painted frames, and for his paintings sub-

stituted a simple gold frame, with parallel reeded lines, now universally known as "the Whistler frame." For his etchings and lithographs he chose a plain white frame in two planes. His canvases and his panels were always of the same sizes; consequently they always fitted his frames. And in his studio, as in few, if any others, frequently there might be half a hundred canvases with their faces to the wall, and only half a dozen frames. But they all fitted, and Whistler never showed his work unframed. This was the outcome of Japanese influence, and of his knowledge of the way the Japanese display their art. His deference to Japanese convention went so far that he put a branch of a tree or a reed into the foreground of his seas and rivers as decoration, in early work, with no reference to the picture, sometimes the only Japanese suggestion in the design.

The Lange Leizen—of the Six Marks went to the Academy of 1864, with *Wapping*. The critic of the *Athenæum*, to whom the Japanese subject seemed "quaint" and the drawing "preposterously incorrect," could not deny the "superb colouring" and the "beautiful harmonies," nor fail to see in *Wapping* an "incomparable view of the Lower Pool of London." "Never before was that familiar scene so triumphantly well painted," Mr. W. M. Rossetti wrote.

Whistler did not send to the *Salon* of 1864, in which Fantin showed his now famous *Hommage à Delacroix*, who had died in 1863. Whistler was among the several admirers whom Fantin painted round the portrait of the dead master. Whistler wanted Fantin to find a place for Rossetti, who would be proud to pose, and Fantin was willing, but Rossetti could not get to Paris. There was also talk of including Swinburne. Unfortunately for both, they were left out of one of the most celebrated portrait groups of modern times, now in the Moreau-Nélaton Collection in the Louvre. The distinguished artists and men of letters were there nominally out of respect to Delacroix, but really to enable Fantin to justify his belief in the beauty of life as it is, and his protest against the classical dictionary and studio properties. Most of them were, or have since become, famous: Whistler, Manet, Legros, Bracquemond, Fantin, Baudelaire, Duranty, Champfleury, Cordier, De Balleroy. Fantin painted them in the costume of the time, as Rembrandt and Hals and Van der Helst, from whom he is said to have taken the idea, painted the regents and archers of seven-

teenth-century Holland. Fantin's white shirt is the one concession to picturesqueness, and the one relief to the severity of detail are the flowers held by Whistler, a lithe, erect, youthful figure, with fine, keen face and abundant hair. That the young American should be the centre of the group was a distinction. When Rossetti saw the picture, he wrote to his brother that it had " a great deal of very able painting in parts, but it is a great slovenly scrawl after all, like the rest of this incredible new school."

Whistler was already working out of the artificial scheme of the Japanese pictures into a phase in which he was more himself than he had ever been. The next year, 1865, he sent to the Academy the most complete, the most perfect picture he ever painted, *The Little White Girl*, which will always be recognised as one of the few great pictures of the world. It was dated 1864, and there are reproductions showing the date. But about 1900 he painted it out. He had been working on the picture, he told us, and " did not see the use of those great figures sprawling there." Jo was the model. Now, there was no masquerading in foreign finery. Whistler painted her as he must often have seen her, in her simple white gown, leaning against the mantel, her beautiful face reflected in the mirror. The room was not littered with his purchases from the little shops in the Strand and the Rue de Rivoli. Japan is in the detail of blue and white on the mantel ; the girl holds a Japanese fan ; a spray of azalea trails across her dress. But these were part of Whistler's house, part of the reality he had created for himself, and he made them no more beautiful than the mantel, the grate, the reflection in the mirror. There was no building up, he painted what he saw. And there was in the handling an advance. The paint is thinner on the canvas, the brush flows more freely.

Swinburne saw the picture and wrote *Before the Mirror : Verses under a Picture*. The poem was printed on gold paper, pasted on the frame, which has disappeared, but we have a contemporary photograph showing the arrangement, and two verses were inserted in the Academy catalogue as sub-title. What Swinburne thought of the picture may be read in a letter he wrote to Ruskin in the summer of 1865 (*Library Edition of the Works of Ruskin*), in which he says that many, especially Dante Rossetti, told him his verses were better

THE MORNING BEFORE THE MASSACRE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

WOOD-ENGRAVING BY DALZIEL BROTHERS FROM "ONCE A WEEK," VOL. VII, P. 210

(*See page 71*)

THE LAST OF OLD WESTMINSTER

OIL

In the possession of A. A. Pope, Esq.

(See page 7.)

than the painting, and that Whistler ranked them far above it. But a closer examination of the picture only convinced him of its greater beauty, and he would stand up for Whistler against Whistler and everybody else.

Swinburne's poem and praise could not make *The Little White Girl* at the Academy better understood than *The White Girl* had been in Berners Street. The rare few could appreciate its "charm" and "exquisiteness" with Mr. W. M. Rossetti, who found that it was "crucially tested by its proximity to the flashing white in Mr. Millais' *Esther*," but that it stood the test, "retorting delicious harmony for daring force, and would shame any other contrast." But the general opinion was the other way. The *Athenæum* distinguished itself by regretting that Whistler should make the "most 'bizarre' of bipeds" out of the women he painted. There was praise for two other pictures. "Subtle beauty of colour" and "almost mystical delicacy of tone" were discovered in *The Gold Screen*, and "colour such as painters love" in the *Old Battersea Bridge*, afterwards *Brown and Silver*. This is the beautiful Battersea, with the touch of red in the roofs of the opposite shore, the link between the early paintings on the river and the Nocturnes that were to follow. *The Scarf*, a picture we do not recognise, attracted less attention, and Whistler, the year before, declared "one of the most original artists of the day" was now dismissed as one who "might be called half a great artist."

Stranger than this was the change in the attitude of the French critics. In 1863 they overwhelmed him with praise. Two years later they had hardly a good word for him. Levi Legrange, forgotten as he merits, wrote the criticism of the Royal Academy of 1865 for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, and all he could see in *The Little White Girl* was a weak repetition of *The White Girl*, a wearisome variation of the theme of white; really, he said, it was quite witty of the Academicians, who could have refused it and the two Japanese pictures, to give them good places and so deliver them to judgment. And then he praised Horsley and Prinsep, Leslie and Landseer. The *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine*, in the *Salon*, made no more favourable impression. It seemed a study of costume to Paul Mantz, who, in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, decided to forget it and remember merely the mysterious seduction of *The White Girl* of two years before. Its

eccentricity was only possible if taken in small doses like the homœopathist's pills, according to the incredible Jules Claretie, who, in the same article in *L'Artiste*, laughed at Manet's *Olympia*. For more than twenty years Whistler was hated in France.

In this *Salon*, 1865, Fantin showed his *Hommage à la Vérité—Le Toast*, the second of his two large groups including Whistler's portrait. In it he strayed so far from the real as to introduce an allegorical figure of Truth, and to allow Whistler to array himself in a gorgeous Chinese robe. "*Pense à la robe, superbe à faire, et donne la moi!*" Whistler urged from London, and Fantin yielded. "*Je l'ai encore revu dans l'atelier en* 1865, *il me posa dans un tableau aujourd'hui détruit, 'Le Toast,' ou il était costumé d'une robe japonaise*," is Fantin's story of it in the notes to us, but Whistler, writing at the time, speaks of the costume as Chinese. He brought it to Paris for the sittings. Fantin was quick to regret his concessions. An allegorical figure could not be made real, the whole thing was absurd. When he got the canvas back he destroyed it, all but the portraits of Whistler, Vollon, and himself. Whistler's is now in the Freer Collection.

In the spring of 1865 Whistler was joined in London by his younger brother. Dr. Whistler had distinguished himself in the Confederate Army as a surgeon and by bravery in the field. He had served in Richmond Hospitals and in Libby Prison; he had been assistant-surgeon at Drewry's Bluff, and in 1864, when Grant made his move against Richmond, he had been assigned to Orr's Rifles, a celebrated South Carolina regiment. In the early winter of 1865 a few months' furlough was given him, and he was entrusted by the Confederate Government with important despatches to England. Sherman's advance prevented his running the blockade from Charleston, nor was there any passing through the lines from Wilmington by sea. He was obliged to go North through Maryland, which meant making his way round Grant's lines. The difficulties and dangers were endless. He had to get rid of his Confederate uniform, and in the state of Confederate finance the most modest suit of clothes cost fourteen hundred dollars; for a seat in a waggon he had to pay five hundred. The trains were crowded with officials and soldiers, and he could get a ride in them only by stealth. The roads were abominable, for driving or riding or walking. Often he was alone, and his one companion

toward the North was a fellow soldier who had lost a leg at Antietam and was trying to get to Philadelphia for repairs to an artificial one. Stanton's expedition filled the country near the Rappahannock with snares and pitfalls; to cross Chesapeake Bay was to take one's life in one's hand; and north of the Bay were the enrolling officers of the Union in search of conscripts. However, Philadelphia was at last reached and a ticket for New York bought at the railroad depot, where two sentries, with bayonets fixed, guarded the ticket-office, and might, for all Dr. Whistler knew, have seen him in Libby Prison. In New York he took passage on the *City of Manchester*, and from Liverpool he hurried to London. One week later came the news of the fall of Richmond and the Confederacy. The furlough was over. There was no going back. It was probably about this time, from the costume and the technical resemblance to Mr. Luke Ionides' portrait, that Whistler painted a head of Dr. Whistler—*Portrait of my Brother*—now owned by Mr. Burton Mansfield, though it should and might have been in the National Gallery in Washington.

Early in September 1865, Whistler's mother was suffering from trouble with her eyes, and went with her two sons to Coblentz to consult an oculist, and this gave Whistler the chance to revisit some of the scenes of the French Set of etchings. After that he spent a month or two at Trouville, where he was joined by Courbet. Whistler's work shows how far he had drifted away, though the two were always friends. In *Sea and Rain*, done at Trouville, there is not a suggestion of Courbet. But we have seen a sea by Courbet, owned by M. Duret, that Whistler might have signed. Jo was there too. The sea-pieces he had begun, including *Courbet on the Shore*, promised great things, he wrote to Mr. Luke Ionides, and as the autumn went on the place was more quiet for work, and the seas and skies more wonderful. He did not get back to London until November. A few months later, early in 1866, he sailed for Valparaiso.

This journey to Valparaiso is the most unaccountable adventure in his sometimes unaccountable career. Various reasons for it have been given: health, a quarrel, restlessness, a whim. But we tell the story as he told it to us:

"It was a moment when many of the adventurers the war had made of many Southerners were knocking about London hunting for

something to do, and, I hardly knew how, but the something resolved itself into an expedition to go and help the Chilians and, I cannot say why, the Peruvians, too. Anyhow, there were South Americans to be helped against the Spaniards. Some of these people came to me, as a West Point man, and asked me to join—and it was all done in an afternoon. I was off at once in a steamer from Southampton to Panama. We crossed the Isthmus, and it was all very awful—earthquakes and things—and I vowed, once I got home, that nothing would ever bring me back again.

"I found myself in Valparaiso and in Santiago, and I called on the President, or whoever the person then in authority was. After that came the bombardment. There was the beautiful bay with its curving shores, the town of Valparaiso on one side, on the other the long line of hills. And there, just at the entrance of the bay, was the Spanish fleet, and, in between, the English fleet, and the French fleet, and the American fleet, and the Russian fleet, and all the other fleets. And when the morning came, with great circles and sweeps, they sailed out into the open sea, until the Spanish fleet alone remained. It drew up right in front of the town, and bang went a shell, and the bombardment began. The Chilians didn't pretend to defend themselves. The people all got out of the way, and I and the officials rode to the opposite hills, where we could look on. The Spaniards conducted the performance in the most gentlemanly fashion; they just set fire to a few of the houses, and once, with some sense of fun, sent a shell whizzing over toward our hills. And then I knew what a panic was. I and the officials turned and rode as hard as we could, anyhow, anywhere. The riding was splendid, and I, as a West Point man, was head of the procession. By noon the performance was over. The Spanish fleet sailed again into position, the other fleets sailed in, sailors landed to help put out the fires, and I and the officials rode back into Valparaiso. All the little girls of the town had turned out, waiting for us, and as we rode in called us 'Cowards!' The *Henriquetta*, the ship fitted up in London, did not appear till long after, and then we breakfasted, and that was the end of it."

Mr. Theodore Roussel says Whistler told him that, on another occasion, he got on one of the defending gunboats and had his baptism of fire amid a rain of shot and shell, and that then, as we have said,

the white lock appeared, a fact which, fine as it is, Whistler omitted from his story to us.

He made good use of his time in Valparaiso, and painted the three pictures of the harbour which are known and two others which have disappeared. These he gave to the steward or the purser of the ship to bring home, and the purser kept them. Once they were seen in his house in London by someone who recognised Whistler's work. "Why, they must be by Whistler!" he said. "Who's Whistler?" asked the purser. "An artist," said the other. "Oh, no," said the purser, "they were painted by a gentleman." The purser started back for South America, and took them with him. "And then a tidal wave met the ship and swept off the purser, the cabin, and the Whistlers." But we believe that one of these pictures is now in the United States.

The voyage back was vaguer than the voyage out. From this vagueness looms one figure: the Marquis de Marmalade, a black man from Hayti, who made himself obnoxious to Whistler, apparently by his colour and his swagger. One day Whistler kicked him across the deck to the top of the companion way, and there sat a lady who proved an obstacle for the moment. But Whistler just picked up the Marquis de Marmalade, dropped him on the step below her, and finished kicking him downstairs. After that Whistler spent the rest of the journey, not exactly in irons, but chiefly in his cabin.

The final adventure of the journey was in London. Whistler never told us, but everybody else says that when he got out of the train at Euston, or Waterloo, someone besides his friends was waiting: whether the captain of the ship, or relations of the Marquis de Marmalade, or an old enemy makes little difference. Somebody got a thrashing, and this was the end to the most unaccountable episode in Whistler's life.

CHAPTER XII: CHELSEA DAYS CONTINUED. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SIXTY-SIX TO EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-TWO.

It was late in 1866 when Whistler returned from Valparaiso. Soon after he moved into No. 2,* at the east end of Lindsey Row, now

* He never lived at No. 3, as Walter Greaves has wrongly stated.

No. 96 Cheyne Walk. It was a three-storey house with an attic, part of the old palace remodelled, and, like No. 7, it looked on the river. Here he lived longer than anywhere else; here he painted the Nocturnes and the great portraits; here he gave his Sunday breakfasts. He had a house-warming on February 5 (1867), when the two Rossettis dined with him, and Mr. W. M. Rossetti wrote in his diary:

"There are some fine old fixtures, such as doors, fireplaces, and Whistler has got up the rooms with many delightful Japanesisms. Saw for the first time his pagoda cabinet. He has two or three sea-pieces new to me: one, on which he particularly lays stress, larger than the others, a very grey unbroken sea [probably *Sea and Rain*], also a clever vivacious portrait of himself begun."

No doubt this is the portrait in round hat, with paint-brushes in his hand.

Mr. Greaves says that the dining-room at No. 2 was blue, with a darker blue dado and doors, and purple Japanese fans tacked on the walls and ceiling; other friends remember "a fluttering of purple fans." One evening Miss Chapman was dining, and Whistler, wanting her to see the view up the river from the other end of the bridge, told her he would show her something "as lovely as a fan!" The studio, again the second-storey back room, was grey, with black dado and doors; from the *Mother* and the *Carlyle* one knows that Japanese hangings and his prints were on the walls; and in it was the big screen he painted for Leyland but kept for himself, with Battersea Bridge across the top, Chelsea Church beyond, and a great gold moon in the deep blue sky. The stairs were covered with Dutch metal. He slept in a huge Chinese bed. Beautiful silver was on his table. He ate off blue and white. "Suppose one of these plates was smashed?" Miss Chapman asked Whistler once. "Why, then, you know," he said, "we might as well all take hands and go throw ourselves into the Thames!"

The beauty of the decoration, as at No. 7, was its simplicity. Rossetti's house was a museum, an antiquity shop, in comparison. The simplicity seemed the more bewildering because it was the growth, not of weeks, but of years. The drawing-room was not painted until the day of Whistler's first dinner-party. In the morning he sent for the brothers Greaves to help him. "It will never be dry in time!"

they feared. "What matter?" said Whistler, "it will be beautiful!" "We three worked like mad," is Mr. Walter Greaves' account, and by evening the walls were flushed with flesh-colour, pale yellow, and white spread over doors and woodwork, and we have heard gowns and coats too were touched with flesh-colour and yellow before the evening was at an end. One Sunday morning Whistler, after he had taken his mother to Chelsea Church, as he always did, again sent for his pupils and painted a great ship with spreading sails in each of the two panels at the end of the hall; the ships are said to be still on the wall covered up. His mother was not so pleased when, on her return, she saw the blue and white harmony, for she would have had him put away his brushes on Sunday as once she put away his toys. But she had many other trials and revelations: coming into the studio one day, she found the parlour-maid posing for "the all-over!" The ships were in place long before the dado of hall and stairway was covered with gold and sprinkled with rose and white chrysanthemum petals. Miss Alexander (Mrs. Spring-Rice) saw Whistler at work upon it when she came to sit, and he had lived six years at No. 2. Whistler's houses were never completely decorated and furnished; they had a look as if he had just moved in or was just moving out. But what was decorated was beautiful.

Whistler sent to the exhibitions of 1867, in London and Paris. He began the year by showing at the French Gallery, in January, one of the paintings of Valparaiso: *Crépuscule in Flesh Colour and Green*. It is the long picture of Valparaiso Harbour in the early evening, ships moored with partly furled sails; the first painting of twilight, and one of the first paintings carried out in the liquid manner of the Nocturnes. There were critics to call it a poem "in colour," though Whistler had not taught them to look for the "painter's poetry" in his work. The upright Valparaiso, a perfect Nocturne, was done at the same time, 1866, but not exhibited until later, and there is an unfinished version of the same subject.

In the *Salon* of 1867, where it had been rejected eight years before, *At the Piano* was accepted, and also *The Thames in Ice—Sur la Tamise: l'Hiver*. It was the year of the French Universal Exhibition. M. Duret writes that probably Mr. George Lucas spoke of Whistler to Mr. Avery, the United States Art Commissioner at the Exhibition. The result

was that a number of his etchings and four pictures were hung: *The White Girl, Wapping or On the Thames, Old Battersea Bridge, Twilight on the Ocean*, the title then of the *Crépuscule in Flesh Colour and Green*. The Hudson River School dominated American art, and Whistler's paintings had to compete with the big *machines* of Church and Bierstadt. Tuckerman, in his *Book of the Artists*, quotes an unnamed American critic who, in 1867, found that Whistler's etchings differed from his paintings in meriting the attention they attracted, but he could see in the *Marines* only "blurred, foggy imperfections," and in *The White Girl* only "a powerful female with red hair, and a vacant stare in her soulless eyes. She is standing on a wolfskin hearthrug, for what reason is unrecorded. The picture evidently means vastly more than it expresses—albeit expressing too much. Notwithstanding an obvious want of purpose, there is some boldness in the handling, and singularity in the glare of the colours which cannot fail to divert the eye and weary it."

Americans were not treated with respect by the Hanging Committee. Their work was put in corridors and dark corners, and Whistler suffered. French critics, enthusiastic over his pictures four years earlier, were now no more appreciative than the American. Paul Mantz was distressed by the "strange white apparition" upon which, at the *Salon des Refusés*, he had lavished his praise. Burty thought that either time exaggerated the defects of the prints or else critical eyes had lost their indulgence, for the etchings were photographic and had a dryness and minuteness due to the early training of "Mr. Whystler." Both wrote in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*. Mr. Avery, however, had the sense to appreciate the etchings, and it was probably at this time he commenced his great collection, now in the New York Public Library.

Whistler and his brother, the Doctor, went to Paris in April. There they heard of the sudden death of Traer, Seymour Haden's assistant, and a member of the British Jury, on which Haden also served. Whistler liked Traer, and the circumstances of his death and burial led to a misunderstanding between the two brothers and the brother-in-law. The three met. The dispute was short and sharp; the result, a summons for the brothers to appear before a *juge de paix*. Whistler had been in the same court a few days earlier. A workman had dropped plaster on him as he passed through a narrow street in the Latin Quarter, and he had met the offence in the only

way possible according to his code. Whistler sent for the American Minister, and the magistrate apologised. When he appeared again, "*Connu!*" said the judge, and there was no apology, but a fine. Haden said he fell through a plate-glass window, Whistler that he knocked him through. Haden maintained that both brothers were against him, Whistler that he demolished Haden single-handed.

It happened just when London gossip got hold of the story of the Marquis de Marmalade and Whistler's return from Valparaiso. Dr. Moncure Conway, in his *Reminiscences*, recalls a dinner given by Dante Rossetti to W. J. Stillman, in the winter of 1867, when "Whistler (a Confederate) related with satisfaction his fisticuff with a Yankee [really the black Marquis] on shipboard, William Rossetti remarked: 'I must say, Whistler, that your conduct was scandalous.' (Stillman and myself were silent.) Dante Gabriel promptly wrote:

'There's a combative Artist named Whistler
Who is, like his own hog-hairs, a bristler;
A tube of white lead
And a punch on the head
Offer varied attractions to Whistler.'"

It was at this time, too, that Whistler had a difference with Legros, to which no reference would be made had it not also become a legend. Friends tried to reconcile them and succeeded badly. The rumours spread, and Whistler began to be talked of as quarrelsome. Haden, when he got back to London, resigned his post as Honorary Surgeon to South Kensington Museum, printed a pamphlet to explain, and threatened to resign from the Burlington Fine Arts Club, of which both he and Whistler were members, unless Whistler was expelled. The Burlington Club wrote to Whistler that if he did not resign they would have to consider his expulsion. Both the Rossettis considered this very improper, and when Whistler's expulsion was voted by eighteen against eight, William Michael Rossetti handed in his resignation at once and Dante Rossetti sent in his two or three days later.

Whistler's manner of resenting injury had a great deal to do with the way he was later treated in England. He explained his code to a friend: "If a man gives you the lie to your face, why, naturally you

hit him." People who did not know him became afraid of him, and this fear grew and was the reason of the reputation that clung to him for years and clings to his memory.

Before Whistler's pictures went to the Royal Academy, Mr. W. M. Rossetti saw them: "*March* 31 (1867). To see Whistler's pictures for the R.A. To the R.A. he means to send *Symphony in White, No. III.* (heretofore named *The Two Little White Girls*), and a Thames picture; possibly also one of the four sea pictures; and I rather recommend him to select the largest of these, which he regards with predilection, of a grey sea and a very grey sky."

Battersea was the Thames picture; *Sea and Rain*, painted while Whistler and Courbet worked together at Trouville, the sea picture; and *The Two Little White Girls* was sent under its new name, *Symphony in White, No. III.*—the first time one of his pictures was catalogued as a Symphony, his first use of a title borrowed from muscial terms to explain his pictorial intention.

Baudelaire had given the hint in prose, Gautier had written *Symphonies* in verse, Murger's Bohemians had composed a *Symphonie sur l'influence de bleu dans les arts*. In 1863 Paul Mantz had described *The White Girl* as a "Symphony in White." There can be no doubt that from these things Whistler got the idea. It was the third variation of white upon white. The difference was in the thin liquid paint. The critic of the *Athenæum* had the sense to thank the "painter who endeavours by any means to show people what he really aims at." But he was almost alone. Burty, in noticing the Academy of 1867 for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, thought the Academy's hanging Whistler at all a fine piece of irony, and regretted the painter's failure to fulfil his early promise.

Hamerton, in the *Saturday Review*, June 1, 1867, represented the feeling of the insulted, solemn, bewildered Islanders: "There are many dainty varieties of tint, but it is not precisely a symphony in white. One lady has a yellowish dress and brown hair and a bit of blue ribbon; the other has a red fan, and there are flowers and green leaves. There is a girl in white on a white sofa, but even this girl has reddish hair; and, of course, there is the flesh-colour of the complexions."

Whistler answered in a letter, not printed, however, until it appeared

in the *Art Journal* (April 1887): "*Bon Dieu!* did this wise person expect white hair and chalked faces? And does he then, in his astounding consequence, believe that a symphony in F contains no other note, but shall be a continued repetition of F F F? . . . Fool!"

Whistler knew that to carry on tradition was the artist's business. Rembrandt, Hals, Velasquez, Claude, Canaletto, Guardi, Hogarth, Courbet, the Japanese, in turn influenced him. Some see, at this period, the influence of Albert Moore, which, if it existed, was as ephemeral and superficial as Rossetti's. It could be argued with more truth that Whistler influenced Albert Moore, who, in at least two pictures, *Harmony of Orange and Pale Yellow*, *Variation of Blue and Gold*, borrowed Whistler's titles. Whistler also knew that the end of all study of the masters should be to evolve something personal, and, in the endeavour to develop his personality, he was passing through experiments and working through difficulties. All this is in his letters to Fantin. A fourth *Symphony in White* was started: the *Three Figures*. In the *Two Girls*, he wrote to Fantin, the harmony was repeated in line and in colour, and he sent a sketch of it. He exulted in the rhythm of line; he despaired because he could not get it right. The picture was scraped out and rubbed down, then repainted, and with each fresh difficulty he deplored the mistakes of his early training. Mr. Eddy writes that Whistler used to call Ingres the "*bourgeois* Greek." This we never heard him say, nor is there any such want of respect in his letters to Fantin, for there he expresses regret that he "did not study under Ingres," whose work he may have liked moderately, "but from whom I would have learned to draw": which was absurd modesty, for he drew better than Ingres, if not so academically, as his etchings prove. He never execrated Courbet and denounced *ce damné Réalisme* so violently as in the autumn of 1867. This was not quite fair, for Realism had brought Courbet to the conclusions which Whistler, unaided, was now reaching: that knowledge of art, ancient and modern, has no end save the development of individuality, and that the artist is to go to Nature for inspiration, but to take from her only life and beauty. Whistler, in his impatience, recalled Realism as practised by the young enthusiasts gathered about Courbet, and denied that Courbet influenced him. "*Ca ne pouvait pas être autrement, parce que je suis très personnel, et que j'ai été riche en qualités qu'il n'avait*

pas et qui me suffisaient." The cry of Nature had appealed to his vanity, Whistler said, and so he had mocked at tradition, and in his early work had copied Nature with the self-confidence of "*l'écolier débauché.*" If at one moment he boasted that the race was for Fantin and himself, because in art, as at the Derby, "*c'est le pur sang qui gagne,*" the next he chafed over the time he had lost before discovering that art is not the exact reproduction of Nature, but its interpretation, and that the artist must seek his motives in Nature and weave from them a pattern on his canvas. He praised Fantin's flowers because he saw in them this pattern. Passages in the letters are the basis of *The Ten o'Clock.* His definition of the relation of drawing to colour—"*son amant, mais aussi son maître*"—suggests the later definition of the relation of the artist to Nature: "her son in that he loves her, her master in that he knows her." Whistler used the same ideas in his talk, in his letters, in his pamphlets, perfecting it.

It was the period of transition. Those who saw him know how hard he worked, and how he was discouraged. For a while he lived with Mr. Frederick Jameson. He never spoke to us of this interval away from Lindsey Row. Mr. Jameson says it was 1868 or 1869; most likely the winter of 1867–68, when Mrs. Whistler went home to visit her family, left poor by the war. Mr. Jameson lived at 62 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, in rooms that had first been Burne-Jones', and afterwards Poynter's. Mr. Jameson writes us:

"The seven months Whistler and I lived together were unproductive and uneventful. He was working at some Japanese pictures, one of which, quite unfinished, was hung at the London Memorial Exhibition. I have seen large portions of it apparently finished, but they never satisfied him, and were shaved down to the bed-rock mercilessly. The man, as I knew him, was so different from the descriptions and presentations I have read of him that I would like to speak of the other side of his character. It is impossible to conceive of a more unfailingly courteous, considerate, and delightful companion than Whistler, as I found him. We lived in great intimacy, and the studio was always open to me, whatever he was doing. We had all our meals together, except when elsewhere engaged, and I never heard a complaint of anything in our simple household arrangements from him. Any little failure was treated as a joke. His courtesy to servants and models

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER BY HIMSELF

CHALK DRAWING.

Formerly in the possession of Thomas Way, Esq.

(*See page 79*)

DRY-POINT. G. 92

STUDY IN CHALK

Formerly in the possession of B. B. MacGeorge, Esq.

WEARY

(*See page 73*)

was particularly charming; indeed, I can't conceive of his quarrelling with anyone without real provocation. His talk about his own work revealed a very different man to me from the self-satisfied man he is usually believed to have been. He knew his powers, of course, but he was painfully aware of his defects—in drawing, for instance. I can remember with verbal accuracy some very striking talks we had on the subject. To my judgment he was the most absolutely truthful man about himself that I ever met. I never knew him to hide an opinion or a thought, nor to try to excuse an action."

The picture Mr. Jameson refers to was called *Three Figures, Pink and Grey*,* in the London Memorial Exhibition. It alone was carried out of the *Six* or *Eight Schemes* or *Projects* in which Whistler was trying to combine Japanese and classical motives, expressing a beauty of form and design that haunted him, and was perhaps best realised in some of the pastel studies. He never ceased to make these studies. There are pastels, chalk drawings, and etchings in which the separate figures of the *Projects* may be found, studies for the series; one was worked out as a fan, another like a cameo. The second version of the *Three Figures*, enlarged from a smaller design, Whistler explained to Mr. Alan S. Cole, was an arrangement he wanted to paint, and he then drew, with a sweep of the brush, the back of the stooping figure to show what he meant. W. M. Rossetti most likely referred to it when he wrote in his diary for July 28, 1867:

"Whistler is doing on a largish scale for Leyland the subject of women with flowers, and has made coloured sketches of four or five other subjects of the like class, very promising in point of conception of colour and arrangement."

The *Projects* were his first scheme of decoration for Leyland. The canvases are about the same size. They are painted with liquid colour, the canvas often showing through. The handling in all save the *Venus*, shown in the Paris Memorial Exhibition and worked on in his later years, is more direct than anything he ever did. They have the same relation to his pictures as the sketches of Rubens and Tiepolo to their decorations. The *Venus* is a single figure, the rest are groups arranged against a balustrade, round a vase of flowers, or on the sands by the sea. Their floating draperies give the scheme of

* See Chapter XXXV.

colour. The experience gained in making these designs was of immense use in the Nocturnes, for the technique is the same, and the same treatment is in the pile of drapery of the *Miss Alexander*. He did not give up until much later this method of painting. The complete series had never been seen publicly before the Paris Memorial Exhibition. They belong to Mr. Freer.

During all his life, till he was given a commission for a panel in the Boston Public Library, Whistler hoped to have the chance to execute a great decorative scheme. When the Central Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum was being decorated, Sir Henry Cole asked him to design one of the mosaic panels. For this, in the winter of 1873, he made a pastel, a richly robed figure carrying a Japanese umbrella. The scheme was in blue, purple, and gold, and a pastel study for it was shown at the London Memorial Exhibition as *Design for a Mosaic*. He spoke of it at the time as *The Gold Girl*. The design was to be enlarged and put on canvas by the brothers Greaves. Sir Henry Cole offered him a studio in the Museum when he was ready to begin his cartoon. "You know, Sir Henry Cole always liked me, and I told him he ought to provide me with a fine studio—it would be an honour to me—and to the Museum!" But models broke down, the fog settled over London, he wanted to get through his Academy picture, he was called to Paris. Whether the cartoon was finished, or whether it was found out of keeping with the *machines* of Royal Academicians in the Central Gallery, is not known. But the decoration was never done.

Hamerton's *Etching and Etchers* was published in 1868. Shortly before, he wrote to Whistler: "I wonder whether you would object to lend me a set of proofs for a few weeks. As the book is already advanced I should be glad of an early reply. My opinion of your work is, on the whole, so favourable that your reputation could only gain by your affording me the opportunity of speaking of your work at length."

Whistler took no notice of the request at the time, but printed it years afterwards as the *Unanswered Letter* in *The Gentle Art*. Hamerton, unused to being ignored by artists, expressed his astonishment in his book: "I have been told that, if application is made by letter to Mr. Whistler for a set of his etchings, he may, perhaps, if he chooses to answer the letter, do the applicant the favour to let him have a copy for about the price of a good horse."

His praise was never without qualification. He saw in Whistler a strikingly imperfect artist, self-concentrated, without range or poetical feeling, whose work was rarely affecting, and most of these remarks were reprinted by Whistler with the *Unanswered Letter* as *Inconsequences*. In the end Whistler let Hamerton have a plate, *Billingsgate*, in its third state, published in the *Portfolio* (January 1878), and, two years after, in the third edition of *Etching and Etchers* (1880).

Hamerton, patronising in his estimate of Whistler's work, exaggerated in his comments on Whistler's prices. Success never induced Whistler deliberately to increase the price of his etchings by making them rare, in the fashion of the young men of to-day. It was different with his dry-points, the number of impressions being limited. Mr. Percy Thomas says that Whistler would throw them on the floor at Lindsey Row and consider them. "I think for this we must say five guineas, and for this six, and for this I must say—ten!" But Mr. Thomas remembers only one attempt to create a price. He had been sent from Bond Street to Lindsey Row with prints for Whistler to sign, and the next day he returned for them. Whistler and Mrs. Whistler were sitting together, silent and sad, and Whistler hurried from the studio without a word. "But what is it? What has happened?" Mr. Thomas asked, and Mrs. Whistler explained that Whistler had thrown the prints into the fire, thinking it would be a good thing to make them rare, and had been miserable since. If he destroyed work he was sure to regret it. "*J'ai tant pleuré après*," as he wrote to Fantin. Another incident remembered by Mr. Thomas would have altered Hamerton's idea of Whistler's business methods. Edmund Thomas had gone to the studio and offered a sum for all the prints in it. Whistler accepted the offer, Mr. Thomas drew a cheque, and carried off the prints. A couple of hours later a messenger appeared with a bundle of proofs. Whistler had come upon them, and sent word that, according to the bargain, they belonged to Mr. Thomas.

Towards the end of the sixties, or beginning of the seventies, Mr. Murray Marks tried to start a Fine Art Company with Alexander Ionides, Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and Morris to deal in pictures, prints, blue and white, and decorative work. They were to sell Watts', Burne-Jones', and Rossetti's pictures, and Whistler's etchings, possibly his paintings. Ionides, who was to advance two or three thousand

pounds, bought the sixteen plates by Whistler now known as the Thames Set, and the prints from them. The sum paid was three hundred pounds. A secretary was engaged for the company, but that was the end of it. The plates became the absolute property of Ionides. He had a hundred sets printed; he gave one set to each of his children; the others were taken over by Messrs. Ellis and Green, and published in 1871 as *Sixteen Etchings of Scenes on the Thames*, price twelve guineas. Later, the plates came into the possession of the Fine Art Society, who sold the prints unsigned as a set in a portfolio for fourteen guineas, or, singly, from half a guinea to two guineas and a half. Finally Mr. Keppel, of New York, bought the coppers, had the steel facing removed, for they had been steeled, Goulding printed a number from each, and some good prints were obtained. The plates were then destroyed.

Official recognition of Whistler, the etcher, continued. The British Museum bought his prints and only stopped when, some years ago, it was discovered that the work of living artists could not be purchased for the Print Room. The ignorance of this regulation was of value to the Museum, where there are now one hundred and nine etchings by Whistler. At the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, there are sixty-one prints, besides several issued in various publications and a second Thames Set in the Ionides Collection. For several years the late Sir Richard R. Holmes purchased prints for Windsor Castle Library, about one hundred and forty in all. He wrote us:

"It is difficult to say when, or how, I first began collecting Whistler's etchings. I had a few, and then I met several while I was looking after other things at Thibaudeau's, and, gradually, I found I had so many that I thought it best to make the collection as complete as I could, and got a number from Whistler himself."

Often Sir Richard went to the studio; often Whistler sent to Windsor prints he thought should be there. The Venetian series was bought. Finally, after Sir Richard's retirement, they were sold "to improve the collection" at what was supposed the height of the "Whistler boom," and after they had been praised in the Memorial Exhibitions of London and Paris. As King Edward VII. on his visit to the London Memorial Exhibition expressed surprise at the few he looked at, it is certain that his Majesty was unaware that the collection

THE LANGE LEIZEN OF THE SIX MARKS
PURPLE AND ROSE
OIL
In the John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia

(*See page 87*)

HARMONY IN FLESH-COLOUR AND GREEN
THE BALCONY
OIL
In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 87)

was at Windsor. Even the portfolio, presented by Whistler to Queen Victoria with his autograph letter asking her acceptance, was first lost, and, when found, sold in 1906, the few prints in Princess Victoria's apartments only being kept. The disposal of the etchings was so badly managed that the Jubilee series brought more, when re-sold a few weeks after the King parted with them, than his Majesty got for the whole collection. During Whistler's lifetime important collections of his etchings were acquired also by the Museums of Dresden, Venice, and Melbourne, and the New York Public Library.

The success of Whistler's plates during the following years is a contrast to the fate of his pictures, which for a long period were neglected. He had nothing in the Academy of 1868. Mr. Jameson has told us of his despair because the *Three Girls* was not finished in time, and of their wandering together about town, in and out of galleries and museums, until at last, before Velasquez in the National Gallery, Whistler took heart again. And he delighted in the admiration of Swinburne in *Notes on Some Pictures of* 1868. The paintings which had not been submitted " to the loose and slippery judgment of an academy," but had been seen by Swinburne in the studio and seemed to him " to have grown as a flower grows," were evidently the *Projects*. A special quality of Whistler's genius, Swinburne said, is " a freshness and fullness of the loveliest life of things, with a high, clear power upon them which seems to educe a picture as the sun does a blossom or a fruit."

In 1869 the Academy moved to Burlington House, and there in 1870 Whistler showed *The Balcony*. From 1867 to 1870 he did not show in the *Salon*. Whistler, like Rossetti, was never without his public, though many years passed before he received Rossetti's rewards. He could rely on the Ionides, Leathart, Frederick Leyland, Huth, Alexander, Rawlinson, Anderson Rose, Jameson, Chapman, Potter. But, unlike Rossetti, he wanted to show his work and receive for it rewards. As far back as 1864 Fantin wrote to Edwin Edwards of Whistler's perseverance, his determination to get into the *Salon*, a phase of his character Fantin said he had not known. Whistler's absence from exhibitions was not his fault. It was his hatred of rejection and fear of being badly hung that drove him from them.

The tyranny of the Academy was no new thing. The opening

of the exhibition was every year the occasion of scandal and of protest against an institution that rejected and still rejects distinguished artists. One gallery after another took up the outsiders. After the Berners Street Gallery came the Dudley, which, in 1867, added to its show of water-colours a show of oils; in 1868, the Corinthian Gallery in Argyll Street; in 1869, the Select Supplementary Exhibition in Bond Street—these last two poor affairs more apt to justify than expose the Academy. Dealers came to the rescue: the French Gallery in Pall Mall, and the Society of French Artists, where Durand-Ruel brought his collection in 1870, and, under the management of M. Charles Deschamps, gave exhibitions until 1877. In the French Gallery and with M. Deschamps Whistler showed many times. He contributed often to the Dudley from 1871, and there the next year, 1872, exhibited for the first time a *Nocturne*. His use of titles to explain his intention was now so well established that in 1872, when *The White Girl* and the *Princesse* were in the International Exhibition at South Kensington, they were catalogued as *Symphony in White, No. I.*, and *Variations in Flesh Colour, Blue, and Grey*, later changed to *Grey and Rose;* and he supplied the explanation, printed in the "Programme of Reception." They were "the complete results of harmonies obtained by employing the infinite tones and variations of a limited number of colours."

His portrait of his mother was sent to the Academy of 1872—*Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter's Mother*. It was refused. Madox Brown wrote to George Rae: "I hear that Whistler has had the portrait of his mother turned out. If so, it is a shame, because I saw the picture, and know it to be good and beautiful, though, I suppose, not to the taste of Messrs. Ansdell and Dobson."

Sir William Boxall threatened to resign from the Council if the portrait was not hung, for he would not have it said that a committee to which he belonged had rejected it. Similar threats have been heard in recent years, and the rejected work has stayed out, and the Academicians have stayed in. Boxall would not yield, and the picture was hung, not well, yet not out of sight; groups, it is said, were always gathered before it to laugh. Still, there it was, the last picture by Whistler at the Academy, where nothing of his was again seen, save

one etching in 1879 : *Putney Bridge*, published by the Fine Art Society and probably sent by them.

The whole affair made talk. But 1872 is interesting, above all, as the year when Whistler first exhibited a portrait as an *Arrangement* and an impression of night as a *Nocturne*.

As it was the last year he showed a picture in the Academy, it may be as well to complete here our account of his relations with this institution. It is said that he put his name down, or allowed it to be put down, for election. He was never elected. Other Americans were, for the Royal Academy is so broad in its constitution that an artist need not be an Englishman, need not be resident in Great Britain, need not have shown on its walls to become a member or honorary member. But though during all these years and until the day of his death Whistler would have accepted election, we have never heard that he obtained a single vote. George Boughton, an American artist and a member of the Royal Academy, explained the Academic attitude when he said that if Whistler had " behaved himself " he would have been President. Even this concession Boughton qualified : " Now, if anyone knowing Whistler and me should go about thinking me serious in imagining that he would make a good President—even of an East End boxing club—such persons live in dense error."

The only comment to make is that Boughton did not understand Whistler, and, in company with the Academy, had not the least artistic sense, or even business appreciation in this matter.

Whistler would have accepted election for one reason only—because of the official rank it would have given him in England. Other Americans hustled to get it ; he expected it as an honour which he deserved. He knew himself to be more distinguished than any member of the Royal Academy. Though recognition was withheld during his lifetime, several Academicians attempted to secure for the Academy a posthumous glory by endeavouring to get together an exhibition of his works the winter after his death. It would, indeed, have been irony if the Academy had, in return for its neglect of Whistler, got the *kudos* and cash as their reward. Another instance of what Americans call " graft " is in the absence from the Chantrey Collection of a picture by Whistler, and the presence of the work of the Academicians who administer the Fund. The Trustees, although they have bought their

own work, paying as much as one thousand pounds to Sir Edward J. Poynter, three thousand to Sir Hubert von Herkomer, three thousand and fifty to Lord Leighton, two thousand to Sir J. E. Millais, Bart., over two thousand to Mr. Frank Dicksee, two thousand to Sir W. Q. Orchardson, two thousand to Vicat Cole, who are or were members of the Council of the Academy, never even offered the sixty pounds for which they might have bought Whistler's *Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Old Battersea Bridge*, since purchased for two thousand by public subscription and given to the Tate Gallery. Is it any wonder that Whistler, disgusted with such conduct, especially on the part of his fellow countrymen, members of the Academy, and others, who might have elected him, left as his only written request relative to his pictures we have seen, the wish that none should ever find a place in any English Gallery? Death did not spare him Academical jealousy. Not content with ignoring him during his lifetime, officially insulting his memory after his death, Sir Edward Poynter, then Director, when he hung *Old Battersea Bridge* in the National Gallery, affixed to it, or allowed to be affixed, a label on which Whistler's name was misspelt, Whistler described as of the British School, the title of the picture incorrectly given, while Whistler's decorated frame was hung upside down. The picture has since, by the irony of fate, been placed in the Gallery of Modern British Art!

CHAPTER XIII: NOCTURNES. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-TWO TO EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT.

Whistler was the first to paint the night. The blue mystery that veils the world from dusk to dawn is in the colour-prints of Hiroshige. But the wood-block cannot give the depth of darkness, the method makes a convention of colour. Hiroshige saw and felt the beauty and invented a scheme by which to suggest it on the block, but he could not render the night as Whistler rendered it on canvas.

Though colour-prints suggested the Nocturnes, they were only the suggestion. Whistler never copied Japanese technique. But Japanese composition impressed him—the arrangement, the pattern, and at times the detail. The high or low horizon, the line of a bridge

LA PRINCESSE DU PAYS DE LA PORCELAINE

ROSE AND SILVER

OIL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 87)

VARIATIONS IN VIOLET AND GREEN

OIL

In the possession of Sir Charles McLaren, Bart.

Showing frame designed by Whistler

Plaque inscribed Whistler at bottom not by artist

(*See page* 90)

over a river, the spray of foliage in the foreground, the golden curve of a falling rocket, the placing of a figure on the shore, the signature in the oblong panel, show how much he learned. He abandoned the Japanese convention in a few years, but he never gave up, he developed rather, what he always spoke of as the Japanese method of drawing.* He translated Japanese art—translate is the word—though he said that he "carried on tradition." His idea was not to go to the Japanese as greater than himself, but to learn what he could from them and make another work of art; a work founded on tradition no less than theirs, and yet as Western as theirs was Eastern.

Night, beautiful everywhere from Valparaiso to Venice, is never more beautiful than in London. First he painted the Thames in the grey day, but, as time went on, he painted it in the blue night. Only those who have lived by the river for years, as we have, can realise the truth as well as the beauty of the Nocturnes. He still, like Courbet, "loved things for what they were," but he chose the exquisite, the poetic. The foolishness of Nature never appealed to him. But Courbet was no more a realist than Whistler if realism means truth.

The long nights on the river were followed by long days in the studio. In the end he gave up making notes. It was impossible for him to work in colour at night, and he had to trust to his memory. In his portraits and his pictures done by day he had a model. But looking at colour and arrangement by night, and retaining the memory until the next morning simply means a longer interval between observation and execution. And, carrying on the tradition of the Japanese and the method of drawing from memory advocated by Lecoq de Boisbaudran, and practised by many of his most distinguished contemporaries in France, Whistler developed his powers of observation. Even then, as he said, to retain the memory of the subject required as hard training as a football player goes through. His method was to go out at night, and all his pupils or followers agree in this, stand before his subject and look at it, then turn his back on it and repeat to whoever was with him the arrangement, the scheme of colour, and as much of the detail as he wanted. The listener corrected errors when they occurred, and, after Whistler had looked long enough, he went to bed with nothing in his head but his subject. The next morning, as he

* See Chapter XXII.

told his apprentice, Mrs. Clifford Addams, if he could see upon the untouched canvas the completed picture, he painted it; if not, he passed another night in looking at the subject. However, it was not two nights' observation alone, but the knowledge of a lifetime that enabled him to paint the Nocturnes. This power to see a finished picture on a bare canvas is possessed by all great artists. But the greater the artist the more he sees and the better he presents it.

Whistler said "Nature put him out," because the arrangement as he found it put him out; Nature is never right. Few painters have understood the art of selection, and here Hiroshige and the other Japanese were of use. He went to Nature for the motive, to the Japanese for the design. This was why he said Nature was at once his master and his servant. The Nocturnes looked so simple to a public trained by Ruskin to believe that signs of labour are the chief merits in a picture, that they seemed unfinished—just knocked off. Yet his letters to Fantin are full of regret for his slowness: "*Je suis si lent. . . . Les choses ne vont pas vite. . . . Je produis peu parceque j'efface tout!*" No one knew the hard work that produced the simplicity. In no other paintings was Whistler as successful in following his own precepts and concealing traces of toil. One touch less and nothing would be left; one touch more and the spell would be broken, and night stripped of mystery. To give the silhouette of bridge or building against the sky; the lines of light trailing through the water or leading to infinite distance; the boats, ghosts fading into the ghostly river; the fall of rockets through shadowy air—to give all these things, and yet to keep them shrouded in the transparency of darkness was the problem he set himself in the Nocturnes painted in the little second-storey back room at Chelsea. It was the night he saw and studied at Cremorne, darker, more mysterious for the sudden flare of the fireworks, for the glow in which little figures danced, for the hint of draperies passing in and out of the shadows—night that toned the tawdry gardens and their vulgar crowd into beauty.

Now everyone can see, and "night is like a Whistler," for Whistler compelled people to look at his pictures, until it has become impossible to look at night without seeing the Nocturnes. He painted the impression that night made on him, and the great artist, like the great author, moves people until they think they see things as he does. Even

in that ever-quoted passage from *The Ten o'Clock*, he does not pretend to see Nature as people see her or as Nature seems to be; his concern is with the impression that Nature at night made on him, and in this he was an impressionist.

The brothers Greaves bought his materials and prepared his canvas and colours. "I know all these things because I passed days and weeks in the place standing by him," Walter Greaves has said to us. Whistler remade his brushes, heating them over a candle, melting the glue and pushing the hair into the shape he wanted. Greaves says that the colours were mixed with linseed oil and turpentine. Whistler told us that he used a medium composed of copal, mastic, and turpentine. The colours were arranged upon a palette, a large oblong board some two feet by three, with the butterfly inlaid in one corner and sunken boxes for brushes and tubes round the edges. This palette was laid upon a table. He had at various periods two or three; and at least one stand, with many tiny drawers, upon which the palette fitted. At the top of the palette the pure colours were placed, though, more frequently, there were no pure colours at all. Large quantities of different tones of the prevailing colour in the picture to be painted were mixed, and so much of the medium was used that he called it "sauce." Greaves says that the Nocturnes were mostly painted on a very absorbent canvas, sometimes on panels, sometimes on bare brown holland, sized. For the blue Nocturnes, the canvas was covered with a red ground, or the panel was of mahogany, which the pupils got from their boat-building yard, the red forcing up the blues laid on it. Others were done on a warm black, and for the fireworks there was a lead ground. Or, if the night was grey, then, Whistler said, "the sky is grey, and the water is grey, and, therefore, the canvas must be grey." Only once within Greaves' memory was the ground white. The ground for his Nocturnes, like the paper for his pastels, was chosen of the prevailing tone of the picture he wanted to paint or of a colour which would give him that tone, not to save work, but to avoid fatiguing the canvas.

When Whistler had arranged his colour-scheme on the palette, the canvas, which the pupils prepared, was stood on an easel, but so much "sauce" was used that frequently it had to be thrown flat on the floor to keep the whole thing from running off. He washed the liquid colour on, lightening and darkening the tones as he worked. In the

Nocturnes, the sky and water are rendered with great sweeps of the brush of exactly the right tone. How many times he made and wiped out that sweeping tone is another matter. When it was right, there it stayed. With his life's knowledge of both the effects he wanted to paint and the way to paint them, at times, as he admits himself, he completed a Nocturne in a day. In some he got his effect at once, in others it came only after endless failures. If the tones were right, he took them off his palette and kept them until the next day, in saucers, or gallipots, under water, so that he might carry on his work in the same way with the same tones. Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt tells us that when she lived in Cheyne Walk, she remembers "seeing the Nocturnes set out along the garden wall to bake in the sun." Some were laid aside to dry slowly in the studio, some were put in the garden or on the roof to dry quickly. Sometimes they dried out like body-colour in the most unexpected fashion. It was a time of tireless research. He had to invent everything, though he profited by the technical training he had gained in painting the *Six Projects*.

Whistler first called his paintings of night Moonlights. Nocturne was Mr. Leyland's suggestion, as we have heard from Mrs. Leyland, and her son-in-law, Val Prinsep, stated in the *Art Journal* (August 1892), that Whistler wrote to Leyland:

"I can't thank you too much for the name Nocturne as the title for my Moonlights. You have no idea what an irritation it proves to the critics, and consequent pleasure to me; besides it is really so charming, and does so poetically say all I want to say and *no more* than I wish."

Whether to mystify, or because he saw something new in his pictures, Whistler repeatedly changed their titles, especially of the Nocturnes, and repeatedly exhibited different pictures with the same title. It is true, as Mr. Bernard Sickert writes: "such alterations made by the artist himself stultify the whole idea, and prove that the analogy with music does not hold consistently. Any musician would tell us that we could not change the title of Symphony in C minor to Sonata in G major without making it an absurdity."

That he should either not have realised this fact, or else have disregarded it deliberately, is the more extraordinary because every Nocturne represents a different effect rendered in a different fashion.

Although he altered his titles, nothing offended him more than when others tampered with them or stole them.

The painting of the Nocturnes continued for many years, and in many places. But the greater number were painted when he lived at Lindsey Row, most from his windows, and few took him beyond Battersea and Westminster. He resented it when people suggested literary titles for them, and he put his resentment into words that " make history " in *The Red Rag*, one of the most interesting documents in *The Gentle Art*, published originally in the *World* (May 22, 1878) :

" My picture of a *Harmony in Grey and Gold* is an illustration of my meaning—a snow scene with a single black figure and a lighted tavern. I care nothing for the past, present, or future of the black figure, placed there because the black was wanted at that spot. All that I know is that my combination of grey and gold is the basis of the picture. Now this is precisely what my friends cannot grasp. They say, ' Why not call it " Trotty Veck," and sell it for a round harmony of golden guineas ? ' "

Lord Redesdale told us that it was he who suggested this title, gaily. Whistler assured another of his friends that he had only to write " Father, dear Father, come home with me now " on the painting for it to become the " picture of the year." Subject, sentiment, meaning were for him in the night itself—the night in its loveliness and mystery. There is no doubt that he carried tradition further and made greater advance in the Nocturnes than in any of his paintings. The subjects are the simplest—factories, bridges, boats and barges, shops, gardens—but in his hands they became things of beauty that will live for ever. The Nocturnes are not all moonlights ; we remember only a few in which the moon appears, some are illumined only by flickering lamplight. They are not invariably pictures of night, but at times of dawn or of twilight. Nocturnes, however, is the name Whistler chose for all, and by it they will always be known.

CHAPTER XIV: PORTRAITS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-FOUR.

While Whistler was painting the Nocturnes, he was working on the large portraits. The *Mother* was the first. We cannot say when he began it. He wrote of it to Fantin, promising to send a photograph, in 1871, but it was not shown until 1872. How many were the sittings, how often the work was scraped down or wiped out, no one will ever know. We have some interesting technical details from Walter Greaves. The portrait was painted on the back of a canvas, as J. saw when it was sent to the London Memorial Exhibition, as Otto Bacher saw when the picture was in Whistler's studio in 1883:

"I noticed that it was painted on the back of a canvas, on the face of which was the portrait of a child. My remark, 'Why, you have painted your mother on the back of a canvas!' received simply the reply: 'Isn't that a good surface?'"

There was scarcely any paint used, Greaves says, the canvas being simply rubbed over to get the dress, and, as at first the dado had been painted across the canvas, it shows through the skirt. Harper Pennington says that the canvas, being absorbent, was stained all through from the painting on the face. But this does not alter Greaves' statement. That wonderful handkerchief in the tired old hands, Greaves describes as "nothing but a bit of white and oil."

What Whistler wanted was to place upon canvas a beautiful arrangement, a beautiful pattern, of colour and line. No painter since Hals and Velasquez thought so much of placing his figure on the canvas inside the frame. No painter since Velasquez understood so well the value of restrained line and restrained colour. The long, vertical and horizontal lines in the background, the footstool, the matting, the brushwork on the wall, add quietness to the portrait, tranquillity to the pose that could be kept for ever; a contrast to the frenzied squirms preferred by his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. Hamerton thought he must have found this pose, or the hint for it, in the Agrippina at the Capitol in Rome, or in Canova's statue of Napoleon's mother at Chatsworth. If Whistler found it anywhere, except in his own studio, it could only have been at Haarlem, where Franz Hals' old ladies sit together with the same serenity and are painted

in much the same scheme. Whistler had been to Holland and seen the beautiful group, and he was haunted by it.

Whistler wrote to Fantin that if the *Mother* marked any progress, it was in the science of colour. What he wanted people to see in it, he explained in *The Red Rag:*

"Take the picture of my mother, exhibited at the Royal Academy as an *Arrangement in Grey and Black*. Now that is what it is. To me it is interesting as a picture of my mother; but what can or ought the public to care about the identity of the portrait?"

And yet Swinburne was not alone in realising its "intense pathos of significance and tender depth of expression," while to a few Whistler gave a glimpse of the other side, as to Mr. Harper Pennington:

"Did I ever tell you of an occasion when Whistler let me see him with the paint off—with his brave mask down? Once standing by me in his studio—Tite Street—we were looking at the *Mother*. I said some string of words about the beauty of the face and figure, and for some moments Jimmy looked and looked, but he said nothing. His hand was playing with that tuft upon his nether lip. It was, perhaps, two minutes before he spoke. 'Yes,' very slowly, and very softly—'Yes, one does like to make one's mummy just as nice as possible!'"

Whistler told us that Madame Venturi, a friend of Carlyle's, determined that he too should be painted.

"I used to go often to Madame Venturi's—I met Mazzini there, and Mazzini was most charming—and Madame Venturi often visited me, and one day she brought Carlyle. The *Mother* was there, and Carlyle saw it, and seemed to feel in it a certain fitness of things, as Madame Venturi meant he should—he liked the simplicity of it, the old lady sitting with her hands in her lap—and he said he would be painted. And he came one morning soon, and he sat down, and I had the canvas ready and the brushes and palette, and Carlyle said: 'And now, mon, fire away!' That wasn't my idea how work should be done. Carlyle realised it, for he added: 'If ye're fighting battles or painting pictures, the only thing to do is to fire away!' One day he told me of others who had painted his portrait. 'There was Mr. Watts, a mon of note. And I went to his studio, and there was much meestification, and screens were drawn round the easel, and curtains were drawn, and I was not allowed to see anything. And then, at last, the screens were

put aside and there I was. And I looked. And Mr. Watts, a great mon, he said to me, "How do you like it?" And then I turned to Mr. Watts, and I said, "Mon, I would have ye know I am in the hobit of wurin' clean lunen!"'"

Carlyle told people that he sat there talking and talking, and that Whistler went on working and working and paid no attention to him whatever. Whistler found Carlyle a delightful person, and Carlyle found him a workman. And it has been said that they used to take walks together, but of this we have no record.

Before the portrait was finished, Whistler had begun to paint Miss Alexander, and another story is of a meeting at the door between the old man coming out and the little girl going in. "Who is that?" he asked the maid. "Miss Alexander, who is sitting to Mr. Whistler." Carlyle shook his head. "Puir lassie! Puir lassie!" Mrs. Leyland, at whose portrait also Whistler was working, remembered that Carlyle grumbled a good deal. Whistler, in the end, had, it is said, to get Phil Morris to sit for the coat. Walter Greaves' memories are of impatience in the studio, especially when Carlyle saw Whistler working with small brushes, so that Whistler either worked with big brushes or pretended to. William Allingham wrote of the sittings in his diary:

"Carlyle tells me he is sitting to Whistler. If C. makes signs of changing his position, W. screams out in an agonised tone: 'For God's sake, don't move!' C. afterwards said that all W.'s anxiety seemed to be to get the coat painted to ideal perfection; the face went for little. He had begun by asking two or three sittings, but managed to get a great many. At last C. flatly rebelled. He used to define W. as the most absurd creature on the face of the earth."

Around this portrait many legends are gathering. Mr. F. Ernest Jackson has told us that a few years ago, one evening in Hyde Park, he was seated on a bench sketching, and an old man came up to him and, seeing he was an artist, asked if he knew Whistler. Then the old man said that his father had posed for the picture. Whether this was Carlyle revisiting the haunts of his walks or a pure invention we do not know. Another tale is that Whistler never painted the picture, which is the work of an anonymous Academician, done as a bet that he could do a Whistler—it is a pity the Academician never did any more.

If Carlyle liked the portrait of the *Mother*, he must have liked his own. There is the same quiet balance, the same careful spacing. Take away either the circular print or the Butterfly in its circle, and the repose is gone. But with such care has every detail been arranged, one never thinks of the balance, the arabesque, the pattern. It is done, and all traces of the thought and the work are gone. One sees only the result Whistler meant should be seen. It has been criticised for showing a want of invention. But if the background and the arrangement are somewhat the same as in the *Mother*, it was because he was deliberately carrying out the same scheme. It was his *Arrangement in Grey and Black, No. II.* In the London Memorial Exhibition it hung opposite the *Mother*, and as they were seen together, the pose and colour and design belonged as inevitably to the nervous old man as to the old lady in her beautiful tranquillity. Whistler is also said to have made a study of Carlyle's head, owned by Mr. Burton Mansfield, and there is a small study of the pose on the back of a canvas, once owned by Greaves.

The *Harmony in Grey and Green: Portrait of Miss Alexander*, a commission from Mr. W. C. Alexander, was painted at the same time, and proves how little Whistler's invention was at fault. There was no repetition. The little girl, in her white and green frock, holding at her side her grey feathered hat, butterflies hovering about her, the weariness of the pose expressed in the pouting red lips, as she stands by the grey wall with its long lines of black, is as familiar as Velasquez' Infantas. Less known is Whistler's care in every detail to make it a masterpiece. He, or his mother, gave Mrs. Alexander directions as to the quality of the muslin for the gown, where it was to be bought, the width of the frills, the ruffles at the neck, the ribbon bows, the way the gown was to be laundried. And only after repeatedly seeing and studying the picture, does one learn his care in weaving the colour through the design. He called the portrait *Harmony in Grey and Green*, but the colours which bind the arrangement together, which play all through it, are green and gold. So wonderfully are these colours used like threads in tapestry that one does not see them, one feels the result. As always, there was the great simple design; the pose of Velasquez, the decoration of Japan, worked out in his own way. The gold runs along the top of the dado; tiny gold

buckles fasten the rosettes of the shoes; there is a gold pin in the hair; the gold of the daisies is repeated in the butterflies which flutter above the head; a note of gold is in the pile of drapery, and the floor has a suggestion of gold in the matting. Green plays the same note. The green sash is carried down by the green feather of the hat, lost in the shadow, which is filled with green and gold. And the green of the daisies is repeated in the green of the drapery. It is not until one has gone all over the picture that these things become evident. The shoes look perfectly black, and so does the dado, and yet there is no pure black anywhere. The whole is bound together by this grey, green, black, and gold scheme running through the composition. It is a perfect harmony. And so subtle is it, that only the result is evident, never the means by which it was obtained.

The story of the sittings we have from Miss Cicely Alexander (Mrs. Spring-Rice):

"My father wanted him to paint us all, I believe, beginning with the eldest (my sister, whom he afterwards began to paint, but whose portrait was never finished). But after coming down to see us, he wrote and said he would like to begin with 'the light arrangement,' meaning me, as my sister was dark. So I was the first victim, and I'm afraid I rather considered that I was a victim all through the sittings, or rather standings, for he never let me change my position, and I believe I sometimes used to stand for hours at a time. I know I used to get very tired and cross, and often finished the days in tears. This was especially when he had promised to release me at a given time to go to a dancing-class, but when the time came I was still standing, and the minutes slipped away, and he was quite absorbed and had quite forgotten all about his promise, and never noticed the tears; he used to stand a good way from his canvas, and then dart at it and then dart back, and he often turned round to look in a looking-glass that hung over the mantelpiece at his back—I suppose, to see the reflection of his painting. Although he was rather inhuman about letting me stand on for hours and hours, as it seemed to me at the time, he was most kind in other ways. If a blessed black fog came up from the river, and I was allowed to get down, he never made any objection to my poking about among his paints, and I even put charcoal eyes to some of his

sketches of portraits done in coloured chalks on brown paper, and he also constantly promised to paint my doll, but this promise was never kept. I was painted at the little house in Chelsea, and at the time he was decorating the staircase ; it was to have a dado of gold, and it was all done in gold-leaf, and laid on by himself, I believe ; he had numberless little books of gold-leaf lying about, and any that weren't exactly of the old-gold shade he wanted, he gave to me.

" Mrs. Whistler was living then, and used to preside at delightful American luncheons, but I don't remember that she ever came into the studio—a servant used to be sent to tell him lunch was ready, and then he went on again as before. He painted, and despair filled my soul, and I believe it was generally teatime before we went to those lunches, at which we had hot biscuits and tinned peaches, and other unwholesome things, and I believe the biscuits came out of a little oven in the chimney, though I can't quite think how that could have been. The studio was at the back of the house, and the drawing-room looked over the river, and we seldom went into it, but I remember that he had matting on the floor, and a large Japanese basin with water and gold-fish in it. I never met Mr. Carlyle in the studio, although he was being painted at the same time, but he shook hands with me at the private view at the Grosvenor Gallery, where the two portraits were exhibited for the first time. [This must have been at Whistler's own exhibition in 1874.] I didn't appreciate that honour at the time, any more than I appreciated being painted by Mr. Whistler, and I'm afraid all my memories only show that I was a very grumbling disagreeable little girl. Of course, I was too young to appreciate Mr. Whistler himself, though afterwards we were very good friends when I grew older, and when he used to come to my father's house and make at once for the portrait with his eyeglass up."

It is said that tears were not only the little girl's, but Whistler's, and that there were seventy sittings before he finished. Mrs. Spring-Rice writes nothing about the number of times the picture was rubbed out and recommenced. He was beginning to put in the entire scheme at once, but on such large canvases this was difficult. Walter Greaves says that the picture was painted on an absorbent canvas, and on a distemper ground. There is also a study for the head.

Whistler was as minute in his directions for the portrait of Miss

May Alexander. He recommended to Mrs. Alexander a milliner who sold wonderful "picture hats"; he suggested that he should paint the portrait in the house at Campden Hill, so that he could see the effect of the picture in the drawing-room where it was to hang. But it remains a sketch of a girl in riding-habit, drawing on her gloves, at her side a pot of flowers, the one detail carried out. He made a number of other sketches in oils, chalk, pen and ink, of the children, and there is a study for Miss May's head also. But only the *Arrangement in Grey and Green* was finished.

Frederick Leyland, the wealthy shipowner, who had met Whistler as early as 1867, about this time commissioned Whistler to paint his four children, Mrs. Leyland, and himself. Leyland had not yet bought his London house, but often came up to town, and Whistler made long visits at Speke Hall, Leyland's place near Liverpool. Mrs. Whistler spent months there. The record of his visits is in the etchings and dry-points of *Speke Hall* and *Speke Shore*, *Shipping at Liverpool*, *The Dam Wood*, and the portraits in many mediums. Speke Hall, Whistler said, put him in better mood for work. The house was not far from the sea, where he found much to do. But the beach was flat, at low tide the sea ran away from him, and at high tide the skies were wrong or the wind blew, and when the sea failed he turned to the portraits. The big canvases travelled with him, backward and forward, from Speke Hall to London, and the sittings were continued in both places. They all sat to him. The children hated posing as much as they delighted in the painter. The son, after three sittings, refused to sit again, which is to be regretted, for the pastel of him, lounging in a chair, with big hat pushed back and long legs stretched out, is full of boyhood. There are pastels of the three little girls, sketches in pen and ink and pencil, one among the few studies for etchings, and the dry-points. Of Florence Leyland, a large, full-length oil was started, the first of his *Blue Girls* in which he wished to paint blue on blue as he had painted white on white. Another portrait of her was never finished and, we believe, never exhibited until it was purchased, in 1906, for the Brooklyn Museum. The full-length of Leyland was the only one completed. Of this there is a small oil study.

Whistler painted Leyland standing, in evening dress, with the ruffled

SYMPHONY IN WHITE. NO. II

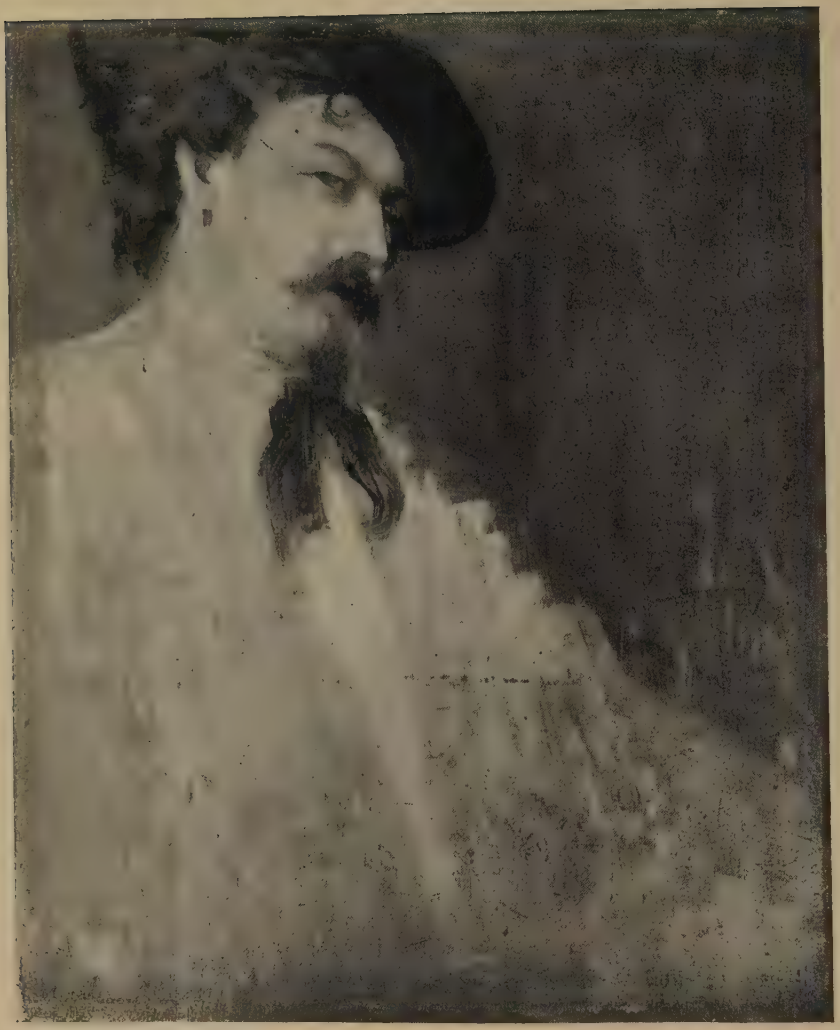
THE LITTLE WHITE GIRL

OIL

In the National Gallery, London

Showing the original frame with early Butterflies and Swinburne's verses on it.
Photograph loaned by W. H. Low, Esq.

(*See page 92*)



PORTRAIT OF DR. WHISTLER

OIL

In the possession of Burton Mansfield, Esq.

(*See page* 95)

shirt he always wore, against a dark background, the first arrangement of black on black. Leyland was good about standing, we know from Mrs. Leyland, but he had not much time, and few portraits gave Whistler more trouble. Leyland told Val Prinsep that Whistler nearly cried over the drawing of the legs. Greaves says that "he got into an awful mess over it," painted it out again and again, and finally had in a model to pose for it nude. It was finished in the winter of 1873. In the portrait of Leyland he began to suppress the background, to put the figures into the atmosphere in which they stood, without accessories. The problem was the atmospheric envelope, to make the figures stand in this atmosphere, as far within their frames as he stood from them when he painted, a problem at which he worked as long as he lived.

Mrs. Leyland had more leisure than her husband, and the sittings amused her. She had sat to Rossetti, she was to sit to others. She was beautiful, with wonderful red hair. Whistler made a dry-point of her, *The Velvet Gown*, and in black velvet she wanted to be painted. But he preferred a dress in harmony with her hair, and designed rose draperies falling in sweeping curves, and he placed her against a rose-flushed wall with a spray of rose almond blossoms at her side. In no other portrait did he attempt a scheme of colour at once so sumptuous and so delicate. The pose was natural to her, she said, though he made a number of pastel schemes before he painted it. Her back is turned, her arms fall loosely, her hands clasped behind her, her head in profile. Mrs. Leyland remembered days when, at the end of the pose, the portrait looked as if it needed only a few hours' work. But in the morning she would find it rubbed out and all the work to be done again. Notwithstanding the innumerable sittings, one of Whistler's models, Maud Franklin, whom he so often etched and painted, was called in to pose for the gown. Whistler knew what he wanted, and nothing else would satisfy him. It must be beautiful to be worthy of the weariness it caused her, he told Mrs. Leyland, and he was trying for the little more that meant perfection. The portrait was never finished, and yet it could not be lovelier. It was a problem, not of luminous dark, but of luminous light, and the accessories have not been suppressed. The matting on the floor, the dado, and the spray of almond blossoms are more elaborately carried out than the detail of any other portrait. What worried him, and probably prevented the picture being finished,

were the hands, almost untouched. It was not that he could not draw hands, for they are beautifully drawn sometimes, notably in the etchings. But he rarely painted them well. He nearly always left them to the last, and some of his later pictures were unfinished because he could not get the hands right. In the *Sarasate*, *The Little White Girl*, the *Symphony in White, No. III.*, the hands are beautifully painted. Some one has said that an artist is known by his painting of hands. These three pictures prove that Whistler could paint hands, but it is as true that he did not paint them when he could help it.

The portrait of Mrs. Louis Huth was not only begun but finished during these years. It is Holbein-like in its dignity, its sobriety, the flat modelling, the exquisite rendering of the lace at the throat and the wrists. Mrs. Huth wears the black velvet Mrs. Leyland wanted to wear, and the background is black of wonderful, luminous, intense depth. She, too, stands with her back turned, and her head in profile. In this portrait, as in the full-length Leyland, Whistler carried out his method of putting in the whole subject at once. The background was as much a part of the design as the figure. If anything went wrong anywhere the whole had to come out and be started again. It was a difficult problem, but the theory taught by Gleyre, and developed in the Nocturnes, was perfected in the portraits of *Frederick Leyland* and *Mrs. Huth*.

Mrs. Leyland sometimes met Mrs. Huth as they came and went, and this fixes the date of the portrait. Mrs. Huth was not strong, and Whistler exhausted the strongest who posed for him. Almost daily, during one summer, he kept her standing for three hours without rest. At last she rebelled. Watts, she said, who had painted her had not treated her in that way. "And still, you know, you come to me!" was Whistler's comment. He had some mercy, however, and at times a model stood for her dress.

After the Academy of 1874 opened with nothing of his in it, Whistler took matters into his own hands, and, like Courbet in 1855, and Manet in 1867, organised a show of his own—his first "one man" show. The gallery was at No. 48 Pall Mall, and the collection included these large portraits, a few Nocturnes, one or two earlier paintings, and one or two of the *Projects*. Thirteen in all. There were fifty etchings. The walls were grey, the exhibits were well spaced, there were palms

and flowers, blue pots and bronzes. He designed the card of invitation, the simple card he always used, and his mother and Greaves wrote the names and addresses, "all making Butterflies as hard as we could," Walter Greaves says, rushing out and posting the cards until the letter-boxes of Chelsea were in a state of congestion. The private view was on June 6. The catalogue is vague.

The exhibition was a shock to London. The decorations seemed an indiscretion, for no one before had suggested to people, whose standard was the Academy, that a show of pictures might be beautiful. The work scandalised a generation blinded by the yearly Academic bazaar; they could not see the beauty of flat modelling and flesh low in tone, they preferred the "foolish sunset" to the poetry of night. But the pictures could have been forgiven more easily than the titles. From the moment he exhibited them as *Arrangements* and *Nocturnes*, his reputation for eccentricity was established. He wrote in *The Gentle Art:*

"I know that many good people think my nomenclature funny and myself 'eccentric.' Yes, 'eccentric' is the adjective they find for me. The vast majority of English folk cannot and will not consider a picture as a picture, apart from any story which it may be supposed to tell. . . . As music is the poetry of sound, so is painting the poetry of sight, and the subject-matter has nothing to do with harmony of sound or of colour."

Well received at first, his position in public favour had of late hung in the balance. The exhibition weighed in the scales against him, and for almost twenty years to come, ridicule was his portion. The *Athenæum* and the *Saturday Review* ignored the show. The *Pall Mall* saw in it more intellect than imagination. Here and there was a polite murmur of "noble conception" and "Velasquez touch." Of all that was said Whistler singled out for notice then, and preservation afterwards, the comments of a forgotten journal, the *Hour*. It has been wondered why he noticed papers of small importance. When he answered the critics and kept the correspondence, it was "to make history," he said, and he selected what he thought important, though it might come from an unimportant source. The *Hour* suggested that the best work was not of recent date; Whistler wrote to remove "the melancholy impression"; and notice and letter "make history," for it was about this time that English critics, following the lead of the

French, were beginning to say that he did not fulfil his early promise, and it is recorded in *The Gentle Art.*

The pictures of this period that remain may seem few in number. But others were completed or in progress, and disappeared before they were exhibited or seen outside the studio. We have reason to believe, however, that some have been recently discovered and eventually will not be lost to the world.

CHAPTER XV: THE OPEN DOOR. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-FOUR AND AFTER.

"Whistler laughed all his troubles away," it has been said. When the Academy rejected him, and the critics sneered at his pictures hung in other galleries, and the public took the critics seriously, he laughed the louder, and felt the more. English ears shrank from his laugh—"his strident peacock laugh," Sir Sidney Colvin called it.

"He was a man who could never bear to be alone," Mr. Percy Thomas remembers. "The door in Lindsey Row was always open," and Whistler liked to think that his friends' doors were open to him. Lord Redesdale, who came to live in the Row in 1875, said that Whistler was always running in and out. Through his own open door strange people drifted. If they amused him he forgave them however they presumed, and they usually did presume. There was a man who, he told us, came to dine one evening, and, asking to stay overnight, remained three years:

"Well, you know, there he was; and that was the way he had always lived—the prince of parasites! He was a genius, a musician, the first of the 'Æsthetes,' before the silly name was invented. He hadn't anything to do; he didn't do anything but decorate the dinner-table, arrange the flowers, and then play the piano and talk. He hadn't any enthusiasm; that's why he was so restful. He was always ready to go to Cremorne with me. At moments my mother objected to such a loafer about the house. And I would say to her, 'Well, but, my dear mummy, who else is there to whom we could say, "Play," and he would play, and "Stop playing," and he would stop right away!' Then I was ill. He couldn't be trusted with a message

to the doctor or the druggist, and he was only in the way. But he had the good sense to see it, and to suggest it was time to be going; so he left for somebody else! It never occurred to him there was any reason he shouldn't live like that."

We have heard of many others. One, to whom Whistler entrusted the money for the weekly bills, gave lunches to his friends and sent flowers and chocolates right and left, while Whistler's debt multiplied.

Artists and art students came in through the open door to see and to learn, and were welcomed. If they came to loaf and to play, they paid for it. They ran errands, posted letters, sat in the corner, interviewed greater bores than themselves. They had to give up their time, and then the end came, and out they went.

One story in Chelsea is of Barthe, who not only taught art but sold tapestry. Whistler bought a number of things from him. "But vill he pay, zis Vistlaire, vill he pay?" Barthe asked, and at last one evening he went to Lindsey Row. A cab was at the door. The maid said Whistler was not in, but Barthe heard his voice and pushed past, and said afterwards:

"Upstairs, I find him, before a little picture painting, and behind him ze bruzzers Greaves holding candle. And Vistlaire he say, 'You ze very man I vant; hold a candle!' And I hold a candle. And Vistlaire he paint, and he paint, and zen he take ze picture, and he go downstair, and he get in ze cab, and he drive off, and we hold ze candle, and I see him no more. *Mon Dieu, il est terrible, ce Vistlaire!*" But he was paid the next day.

Few men depended more on companionship than Whistler, and to few was the companionship women alone can give more essential. All his life he retained his *cœur de femme*, and most of his friends were women. For years, until her health broke down, his mother was with him. Many wondered, with Val Prinsep, who thought Whistler "always acting a part," whether "behind the *poseur*, there was not quite a different Whistler. Those who saw him with his mother were conscious of the fact that the irrepressible Jimmy was very human. No one could have been a better son, or more attentive to his mother's wishes. Sometimes old Mrs. Whistler, who was a stern Presbyterian in her religion, must have been very trying to her son. Yet Jimmy, though he used to give a queer smile when he mentioned them, never

in any way complained of the old lady's strict Sabbatarian notions, to which he bowed without remonstrance."

The models drifting in and out of the open door were mostly women. He liked to have them with him, and felt it necessary to see them about the studio, for, as he watched their movements, they would take the pose he wanted, or suggest a group, an arrangement. An admirable example is the *Whistler in his Studio*, done in the first house in Lindsey Row. It was a beautiful study, he wrote to Fantin, for a big picture like the *Hommage à Delacroix*, with Fantin, Albert Moore, and himself, the "White Girl" on a couch, and *la Japonaise* walking about, grouped together in his studio: all that would shock the Academicians. The colour was to be dainty; he in pale grey, Jo in white, *la Japonaise* in flesh-colour, Albert Moore and Fantin to give the black note. The canvas was to be ten feet by six. If he ever did more than the study of the two girls and himself, it has disappeared. The painting was owned by Mr. Douglas Freshfield, and now belongs to the Chicago Art Institute, and is as dainty as Whistler described it. He holds the small palette he sometimes used with raised edges to keep the liquid colour from running off, he wears the long-sleeved white waistcoat in which he worked, and he painted from the reflection in the mirror, for his brush is in his left hand. The two women most likely are the two models for *Symphony in White, No. III.*, who have stopped posing. Another version of this studio interior is in the City of Dublin Art Gallery, but Whistler repudiated it. Mr. Gallatin says that Sir Hugh Lane, who presented the picture to the Dublin Gallery, gave it a very different record, holding that it was well known in Chelsea, that Whistler liked it, and eventually painted for Mr. Freshfield the version now in the Chicago Art Institute. The truth of the matter, however, is that not only did Whistler repudiate the Dublin picture, but, when it was shown as the original in the Whistler Memorial Exhibition in London, Mr. Freshfield demanded that this description be at once withdrawn or he would remove the picture and sue the International Society, who organised the Exhibition, for false statements and damages. Sir Hugh Lane did not produce during his lifetime one scrap of proof in corroboration of statements denied by Whistler, nor has any proof been produced since his death. Another reason to doubt Lane's description is that Whistler never

copied one of his pictures, and the Dublin Gallery's version is a slavish copy, save in the colour scheme. Whistler never painted it. There is nothing else of the kind so complete as *Whistler in his Studio*, but there are innumerable studies of figures, reading or sewing, not posing, though the minute he started to draw them they had to pose. Everybody who was with him, and somebody always was, had to sit and be painted, etched, or drawn.

Refugees from France in 1870 drifted through the open door, artists whose work was stopped by the Commune and who came to England to take it up again. There were Dalou, Professor Lantéri, and Tissot who, at Lindsey Row, found the inspiration for his pictures on the river. Fantin stayed in Paris, but later told stories of the siege which Whistler repeated to us. He asked Fantin what he did. "Me?" replied Fantin, "I hid in the cellar. *Je suis poltron, moi.*" One of Fantin's many letters to Edwin Edwards shows Whistler's hold over those who were drawn to him for a better reason than curiosity. It was long since Fantin had heard from Whistler, for whom, however, he wrote, his affection was that of a man for a mistress still loved despite the trouble she might give. He did not understand women, they frightened him, "*mais au fond, tout au fond, je sens que si j'étais aimé, je serais l'esclave le plus soumis et serais peut-être capable de toutes les plus grandes folies. Je sens que c'est la même chose pour Whistler : s'il savait comme il pourrait avoir un ami dévoué et aimant en moi. Malgré tout, il est séduisant.*"

And yet they saw less of each other as the years went on, perhaps because Fantin became more of a hermit, while Whistler's door opened wider.

Journalists and critics hurried to Lindsey Row once they knew the door was open. Mr. Walter Greaves, who sometimes showed the studio, remembers doing the honours for Tom Taylor. Whistler told Mr. Sidney Starr that, while the *Miss Alexander* was in the studio, Tom Taylor came :

"There were other visitors. Taylor said, 'Ah, yes, um,' then remarked that the upright line in the panelling of the wall was wrong, and the picture would be better without it, adding, 'Of course, it's a matter of taste.' To which Whistler replied, 'I thought that perhaps for once you were going to get away without having said anything

foolish ; but remember, so that you may not make the mistake again, it's not a matter of taste at all, it is a matter of knowledge. Good-bye.' "

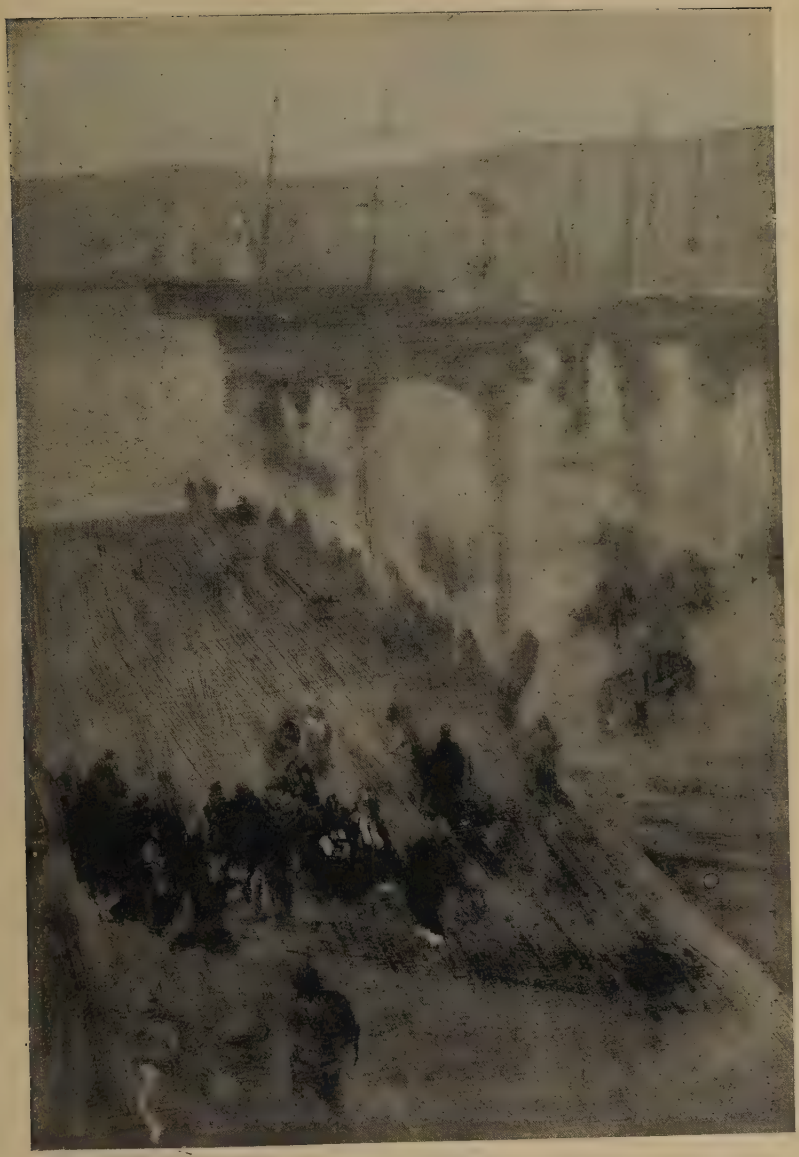
Journalists and critics filled columns with praise of forgotten masterpieces by unknown Academicians, but seldom spared space for the work in Whistler's studio. Their gossip after the visit was about the man, not his pictures.

Poets, the younger literary men, came in through the open door. Mr. Edmund Gosse, introduced by Mr. W. M. Rossetti, has described to us his impressions of the bare room with little in it but the easel, and of the small, alert, nervous man with keen eyes and beautiful hands who sat before it, looking at his canvas, never moving but looking steadily for twenty minutes or half an hour, perhaps, and then, of a sudden, dashing at it, giving it one touch, and saying, " There, well, I think that will do for to-day ! " an astonishing experience to one used to tapestried studios and painters more industrious with their hands than their brains.

The fashionable world, royalty, crowded through the open door. Lindsey Row was lined with the carriages of Mayfair and Belgravia. Whistler was the fashion, if his pictures were not, and he could say nothing, he could do nothing, that did not go the rounds of drawing-rooms and dinner-tables. " Ha, ha ! I have no private life ! " he told a man who threatened him with exposure. And, from this time onward, he never had.

He knew what his popularity meant. It was among the numbers who gathered about him because he was the fashion, that he could not afford to have friends.

If the frequent use of the name " Jimmie " by people in speaking and writing of him implies a friendliness on his part with every Tom, Dick, and Harry, nothing could be further from the fact. His friends, who were his contemporaries, called him " Jimmie," but rarely to his face, and the rest who did once had not the courage to a second time. We remember a foolish youth who, meeting him at our table, addressed him in free and easy fashion as " Whistler." He said nothing. He only looked, but the youth did not forget the Mr. after that. Whistler was the last man to allow familiarity or to make friends. He understood how to keep at a distance those he did not know or did not want to know.



NOCTURNE

BLUE AND GOLD, VALPARAISO BAY

OIL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 99)

SYMPHONY IN WHITE. NO. III

OIL

In the possession of Edmund Davis, Esq.

(*See page 102*)

It was thought that he could not live without fighting, that to him "battle was the spice of life." But he never fought until fighting was forced upon him. There were no fights, just as there was no mystery, at first. Every man was a friend until he proved himself an enemy. Whistler's temper was violent. Few who ever saw him roused can forget the fire of his eyes, the fury of his face, the sting of his tongue. He was terrible then, and lost all control of himself. But there was always good cause for his rage, and once the storm had passed he laughed this, as all his other troubles, away and when the fighting began enjoyed it. He liked a fight, roared over it. Lord Redesdale told us Whistler would come to him in the morning at breakfast, or in the evening after dinner, to read the latest correspondence, discovering the dullness of the enemy.

Whistler delighted in society, finding in it the change most men find in sport or travel. He hated anything that stopped his work. Hunting and fishing were an abomination. We never heard of his attempting to shoot, except once at the Leylands', when, he said: "I rather fancied I shot part of a hare, for I thought I saw the fluff of its fur flying. I knew I hit a dog, for I saw the keeper taking out the shot!" His solicitor, Mr. William Webb, tried once to teach him to ride a bicycle. "Learn it? No," he said to us. "Why, I fell right off—but I fell in a rose-bush!" Motoring offended him and he abused J. for taking it up. But people amused him, and he enjoyed the "parade of life." This is the explanation of the dandyism that has shocked more than one of his critics. Whistler was never content with half-measures. He would not have played the social game at all had he not been able to play it well, and if taking infinite pains with his appearance means dandyism, then he was a dandy. The very word pleased him, and he used it often, in American fashion, to express perfection or charm or beauty. Never was any man more particular about his person and his dress. He was as careful of his hair as a woman, though there was no need of the curling-tongs with which he has been reproached; the difficulty was to restrain his curls and keep them in order. The white lock gave just the right touch. However fashion changed, he always wore the moustache and little imperial which other West Point men of his generation retained through life. Even his thick bushy eyebrows were trained, and they added to the humorous

or sardonic expression of the deep blue eyes from which many shrank. His beautiful hands and nails were beautifully kept. In his dress was always something a little different from that of other men. His clothes were speckless, faultless, fitting irreproachably. He preferred pumps to boots, short sack-coats to tailed coats. His linen was of the finest, and a little Butterfly was embroidered on his handkerchief; and his near-sightedness was a reason for the monocle of which he knew how to make such good use. He was long at his toilet, minute in every detail. Before entering a drawing-room we have seen him pause to adjust his curls and his cravat. So it was with everything. There was dandyism in his delicate handwriting, and the same care went to the arrangement of his cards of invitation and his letters; he would consider even the placing of his signature on a receipt. And he devoted no less attention to his breakfasts and dinners that made the talk of the town. He respected the art of cookery—the "Family Bible" he called the cook-book; he ate little, but that little had to be perfect both in cooking and serving.

From the beginning at Lindsey Row he gave these breakfasts and dinners. Mr. Luke Ionides remembers calling one afternoon when "Jimmy was busy putting things straight; he asked me if I had any money. I told him I had twelve shillings. He said that was enough. We went out together, and he bought three chairs at two-and-sixpence each, and three bottles of claret at eighteenpence each, and three sticks of sealing-wax of different colours at twopence each. On our return he sealed the top of each bottle with a different coloured wax. He then told me he expected a possible buyer to dinner, and two other friends. When we had taken our seats at the table, he very solemnly told the maid to go down and bring up a bottle of wine, one of those with the red seal. The maid could hardly suppress a grin, but I alone saw it. Then, after the meat, he told her to fetch a bottle with the blue seal; and with dessert the one with the yellow seal was brought, and all were drunk in perfect innocence and delight. He sold his picture, and said he was sure the sealing-wax had done it."

All his life he invented wines and was continually making "finds." We remember his discovery of a wonderful Croûte Mallard at the Café Royal, and an equally wonderful Pouilly supplied by his French barber, who had been one of Napoleon III.'s generals or Maximilian's

aides-de-camp. Another thing at the Café Royal besides the *menu* was the N on the wine-glasses, which were said to have come from the Tuileries in 1870, but, no matter how many have been broken, it is still there. Though he liked good wine, he drank as little as he ate. One of the innumerable stories often repeated may give a different idea. After a dinner in somebody's new house he slipped on the stairs and fell. As he was helped up, he was asked if he had hurt himself. "No," he said, "but it's all the fault of the damned teetotal architect." Those who dined with him, or with whom he dined, knew that he was one of the most abstemious of men. On the other hand, it was astonishing how quickly some things went to his head. In later days when J. would stop with him at Frascati's, on the way home from the studio, the talk grew gayer, the "Ha! Ha!" louder with the first sip of his absinthe.

We have the story of his first dinner-party from Mr. Walter Greaves, whose workman was sent to Madame Venturi's to borrow, and came back hung about with, pots and kettles and pans, and from Mrs. Leyland, who lent her butler and at the last moment, with her sister, put up muslin curtains at the windows. Guests remember Whistler's alarm when a near-sighted young lady in white mistook the Japanese bath, filled with water-lilies, for a divan, and tried to sit on the goldfish; and Leyland's disgust when Grisi's daughter, whom he took in to dinner, would talk to him not of music, but of Ouida's novels. Everyone found the *menu* "a little eccentric, but excellent." The earliest *menu* we have seen is one, in Mr. Walter Dowdeswell's possession, of a dinner in the eighties, as simple as it is characteristic of Whistler, and we give it: *Potage Potiron; Soles Frites; Bœuf à la Mode; Chapon au Cresson; Salade Laitue; Marmalade de Pommes; Omelette au Fromage.*

Mr. Alan S. Cole's diary is the record of dinners in the seventies, of the company, and the talk:

"*November* 16 (1875). Dined with Jimmy; Tissot, A. Moore, and Captain Crabb. Lovely blue and white china, and capital small dinner. General conversation and ideas on art unfettered by principles. Lovely Japanese lacquer.

"*December* 7 (1875). Dined with Jimmy; Cyril Flower, Tissot, Story. Talked Balzac—*Père Goriot—Cousine Bette—Cousin Pons—Jeune Homme de Province à Paris—Illusions perdues.*

"*January* 6 (1876). With my father and mother to dine at Whistler's. Mrs. Montiori, Mrs. Stansfield, and Gee there. My father on the innate desire or ambition of some men to be creators, either physical or mental. Whistler considered art had reached a climax with Japanese and Velasquez. He had to admit natural instinct and influence, and the ceaseless changing in all things.

"*March* 12 (1876). Dined with Jimmy. Miss Franklin there. Great conversation of Spiritualism, in which J. believes. We tried to get raps, but were unsuccessful, except in getting noises from sticky fingers on the table.

"*March* 25 (1876). Round to Whistler's to dine. Mrs. Leyland and Mrs. Galsworthy and others.

"*September* 16 (1876). Dined with W. Eldon there. Hot discussion about Napoleon (*Napoléon le petit*, by Hugo). The Commune, with which J. sympathised [some fellow-feeling for Courbet, the reason perhaps]. Spiritualism.

"*December* 29 (1876). To dine with J.—the Doctor. Goldfish in bowl. Japanese trays—storks and birds. He read out two or three stories by Bret Harte: *Luck of Roaring Camp*, *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, *Tennessee's Partner*. Chatted as to doing illustration for a catalogue for Mitford, and as to his Japanese woman, and a decorated room for the Museum.

"*February* 18 (1878). To Whistler's. Mark Twain's haunting jingle in the tramcar: 'Punch, brothers, punch with care; punch in the presence of the passenjaire!'

"*March* 27 (1878). Dined with Whistler, young Mills and Lang, who writes. He seemed shocked by much that was said by Jimmy and Eldon."

Whistler delighted not only in Mark Twain's, but in all jingles. He had an endless stock and recited them in the most unexpected places and at the most inappropriate moments. He went to the trouble to write down for us the lines of the *Woodchuck:*

> "*How much wood would the woodchuck chuck*
> *If the woodchuck could chuck wood?*
> *Why! just as much as the woodchuck would*
> *If the woodchuck could chuck wood!*"

And as we read them in the familiar writing, we wonder why they never seemed foolish, but quite right, as he chanted them. In the Haden correspondence, published in *The Gentle Art*, a new version of Peter Piper may be found. He loved to quote the *Danbury News* man and the *Detroit Free Press*. He never lost his joy in American humour, and because there is something of the same spirit in Rossetti's limericks he never tired of repeating them, especially the two beginning :

> "*There is an old person named Scott*
> *Who thinks he can paint and cannot,*"

and

> "*There is an old painter called Sandys*
> *Who suffers from one of his glands.*"

Whistler invented Sunday breakfasts. The day was unusual in London and also the hour—twelve instead of nine. "Nothing exactly like them has ever been in the world. They were as much himself as his work," George Boughton wrote. Whistler arranged the table, seeing that everything placed on it was beautiful : the blue and white, the silver, the linen, the Japanese bowl of goldfish or the vase of flowers in the centre. If his resources failed, he borrowed from Lord Redesdale, or, after his brother was married, from Mrs. William Whistler, whose Japanese lacquer was his admiration. He prepared the *menu*, partly American, partly French, and wholly bewildering to joint-loving Britons. His description of the British breakfasts he was asked to were amazing : "Beef, the people or the rats had been gnawing, beer, and cheese rinds, salad without dressing and tarts without taste. Quite British ! " His buckwheat cakes are not forgotten. He would make them himself, if the party were informal, and he never spoke again to one man who ventured to dislike them.

Sometimes eighteen or twenty sat down to breakfast, more often half that number. All were people Whistler wanted to meet, people who talked, people who painted, people who wrote, people who bought, people who were distinguished, people who were royal, people who were friends. From Mr. Cole we have notes of the company and talk at some of the breakfasts :

"*June* 17 (1877). To breakfast at J.'s. F. Dicey, young Potter,

and Huth there. He showed some studies from figures—light and elegant—to be finished.

"*June* 29 (1879). To Whistler's for breakfast. Much talk about *Comédie-Française* and Sarah Bernhardt.

"*July* 8 (1883). Breakfast at W.'s. Lord Houghton, Oscar Wilde, Mrs. Singleton, Mrs. Moncrieff, Mrs. Gerald Potter, Lady Archie Campbell, the Storys, Theodore Watts, and some others. Mrs. Moncrieff sang well afterwards. Lord Houghton asked me about my father's memoirs. Margie [Mrs. Cole] sat by him."

The breakfasts remain "charming" in Mrs. Moncrieff's memory. And "charming" is Lady Colin Campbell's word. Lady Wolseley writes us that she remembers "a flight of fans fastened up on the walls, and also that the table had a large flat blue china bowl, or dish, with goldfish and nasturtiums in it." Mrs. Alan S. Cole recalls a single tall lily springing from the bowl; though invited for twelve, it was wiser, she adds, not to arrive much before two, for to get there earlier was often to hear Whistler splashing in his bath somewhere close to the drawing-room. This was Mr. W. J. Rawlinson's experience once. He had been asked for twelve, and got there a few minutes before as for breakfast in Paris. Several guests had come, others followed, a dozen perhaps; one was Lord Wolseley. For Whistler they waited—and they waited and they waited. At about half-past one they heard a splashing behind the folding-doors. There was a moment of indignation. Then Howell hurried in, beaming on them. "It's all right, it's all right!" he said, "Jimmie won't be long now; he is just having his bath!" Howell talked and they waited, and two struck before Whistler appeared, smiling, gracious, all in white, for it was hot, and they went down to breakfast. As soon as he came in he was so fascinating that the waiting was forgotten. We have heard but of one person who did not like the breakfasts, an artist who went one morning, and his story was that he drove down to Chelsea from St. John's Wood, and found Whistler alone, and they went into the dining room, and there was an egg on toast for Whistler and another egg on toast for himself, and that was all. Then Whistler wanted to show him pictures, but he was furious, and he said, 'No, Whistler, I have paid three shillings and sixpence for a cab to come here, and I have eaten one egg, and I will look at no pictures!"

Sir Rennell Rodd writes us of the breakfasts at 13 Tite Street, "with the inevitable buckwheat cakes, and green corn, and brilliant talk. One I remember particularly, for we happened to be thirteen. There were two Miss C.'s, the younger of whom died within a week of the breakfast; and an elderly gentlemen, whose name I forget, who was there, when he heard of it at his club, said, 'God bless my soul!' had a stroke, and died too."

J. was once only at a Chelsea breakfast, in 1884, at Tite Street, when Mr. Menpes was present. But we often breakfasted in Paris at the Rue du Bac, and in London at the Fitzroy Street studio. It made no difference who was there, who sat beside you, Whistler dominated everybody and everything in his own as in every house he visited. Though short and small—a man of diminutive stature the usual description—his was the commanding presence. When he talked everyone listened. At his table he had a delightful way of waiting upon his guests. He would go round with a bottle of Burgundy in its cradle, talking all the while, emphasising every point with a dramatic pause just before or just after filling a glass. We remember one Sunday in Paris in 1893—Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Abbey and Dr. D. S. MacColl the other guests—when he told how he hung the pictures at the annual Liverpool exhibition in 1891:

"You know the Academy baby by the dozen had been sent in, and I got them all in my gallery; and in the centre, at one end, I placed the birth of the baby—splendid; and opposite, the baby with the mustard-pot, and opposite that the baby with the puppy; and in the centre, on one side, the baby ill, doctor holding its pulse, mother weeping. On the other by the door, the baby dead, the baby's funeral, baby from the cradle to the grave, baby in heaven, babies of all kinds and shapes all along the line; not crowded, you know, hung with proper respect for the baby. And on varnishing day, in came the artists, each making for his own baby. Amazing! His baby on the line. Nothing could be better! And they all shook my hand, and thanked me, and went to look—at the other men's babies. And then they saw babies in front of them, babies behind them, babies to right of them, babies to left of them. And then, you know, their faces fell; they didn't seem to like it—and—well—ha! ha!—they never asked me to hang the pictures again at Liverpool! What!"

As he told it he was on his feet, pouring out the Burgundy, minutes sometimes to fill a glass. There were minutes between one guest and the next; he seemed never to be in his chair; it was fully two hours before the story and breakfast came to an end together. But though no one else had a chance to talk, no one was bored. It was the same wherever he went if the people were sympathetic. If they were not, he could be as glum as anybody, especially if he was expected to "show off"; or, he could go fast asleep. In sympathetic houses he not only led the talk, he controlled it. There is a legend that he and Mark Twain met for the first time at a dinner, when they simultaneously asked their hostess who that noisy fellow was? For there was noise, there was gaiety, and everybody was carried away by it, even the servants.

Whistler was an artist in his use of words and phrases, making them as much a part of his personality as the white lock and the eye-glass. His sudden "What," his familiar "Well, you know," his eloquent "H'm! h'm!" were placed as carefully as the Butterfly on his card of invitation, the blue and white on his table. No man was ever so eloquent with his hands, he could tell a whole story with his fingers, long, thin, sensitive—"alive to the tips, like the fingers of a mesmerist," Mr. Arthur Symons writes of them. No man ever put so much into words as he into the pause for the laugh, into the laugh itself, the loud, sharp "Ha, ha!" and into the deliberate adjusting of his eye-glass. So much was in his manner that it is almost impossible to give an idea of his talk to those who never heard it. We have listened to him with wonder and delight, and afterwards tried to repeat what he said, to find it fall flat and lifeless without the play of his expressive hands, without the malice or the music of his laugh. This is why the stories of him in print often make people marvel at the reputation they have brought him. Not that the talk was not good; it was. His wit was quick, spontaneous. "Providence is very good to me sometimes," was his answer when we asked him how he found the telling word. He has been compared to Degas, who, it is said, led up the talk to a witticism prepared beforehand; Whistler's wit met like a flash the challenge he could not have anticipated. He loved a good story, made the most of it, treated it with a delicacy, a humour that was irresistible. He could be fantastic, malicious, audacious,

serious, everything but dull or gross. He shrank from grossness. No one, not his worst enemies, can recall a story from him with a touch or taint of it. The ugly, the unclean revolted him.

We have heard of Sundays when Whistler sketched the people who were there, hanging the sketches in his drawing-room. One Sunday he made the dry-point of Lord (then Sir Garnet) Wolseley. Lord Wolseley himself has forgotten it: "I fear, beyond the recollection of an agreeable luncheon at his house at Chelsea, I have no reminiscence," he wrote to us. And Lady Wolseley thinks "Lord Wolseley may have gone to him for sittings early, and have breakfasted with him. I have a vague impression." But Howell was summoned that Sunday from Putney to amuse the sitter and prevent his hurrying off, and he put the date in his diary:

"*November* 24 (1877). Went to Whistler's, met Sir Garnet Wolseley. Whistler etched him; got two first proofs, second one touched, 42*s*. Met Pellegrini and Godwin."

Whistler went everywhere, and knew everybody, though he did not allow everybody to know him. When somebody said to him, "The Prince of Wales says he knows you," Whistler's answer was, "That's only his side." He lived at a rate that would have killed most men, and at an expense in details that was fabulous. "I never dined alone for years," he said. If no one was coming to him, if no one had invited him, he dined at a club. He was a familiar figure, at different periods, in the Arts, Chelsea, and Hogarth Clubs, the Arundel, the Beaufort Grill Club, or, for supper, at the Beefsteak Club. Many of his letters, for a period, were dated from "The Fielding." He was once put up at the Savile, he told us, but heard no more about it; and at the Savage, but that, he said, "is a club to belong to, never to go to." At the Reform, had he thought of it, he lost all chance of election one night when his laugh woke up the old gentleman whose snores were equally loud in the reading-room. An amusing proof of the number of his clubs is Mr. Alden Weir's story of passing through London and being asked to dine by Whistler, who suggested first one club, then another, and drove him about to half a dozen or more, at each getting out of the cab alone and coming back to say nobody of any account was there, or the dinner was not good, or some other excuse; and, at last, with an apology, driving him home to

Chelsea, where a large party waited and an excellent dinner was served, and Mr. Weir was the one guest not in evening dress, for Whistler kept the party waiting still longer while he changed. In the Lindsey Row days Whistler sometimes dined in a cheap French restaurant, "good of its kind," with Albert Moore and Homer Martin, a man he delighted in. Many artists dined there, he said, and would sit and talk until late. "But then, you know, the sort of Englishman who is entirely outside all these things, and likes to think he is 'in it,' began to come too, and that ruined it."

To Pagani's, in Great Portland Street, a tiny place then, he went with Pelligrini and others. He was often at the Café Royal in the eighties with Oscar Wilde; towards the end, Mr. Heinemann, Mr. E. G. Kennedy, and we were apt to be with him, when, if he ordered the dinner, *Poulet en casserole* was the principal dish, and sweet champagne the wine. Never shall we forget a dinner there, in 1899, to Mr. Freer, who had just bought a picture. We and Mr. Heinemann were the other guests. Much as Whistler wished to be amiable to Mr. Freer, he was tired, and, somehow, the dinner was not right, and there were scenes in our corner behind the screen. Mr. Freer felt it necessary to entertain the party, which he did by talking pictures like a new critic, and Japanese prints like a cultured school-ma'am. Whistler slept loudly and we tried to be attentive, until at length, at some psychological moment in Hiroshige's life or in Mr. Freer's collection, Whistler snored such a tremendous snore that he woke himself up, crying: "Good Heavens! Who is snoring?"

Whistler had the faculty of being late when invited to dinner. One official evening, he arrived an hour after the time. "We are so hungry, Mr. Whistler!" said his host. "What a good sign!" was his answer. At times he felt "like a little devil," and he told us of one of these occasions:

"I arrived. In the middle of the drawing-room table was the new *Fortnightly Review*, wet from the press; in it an article on Méryon by Wedmore, and there was Wedmore—the distinguished guest. I felt the excitement over the great man, and the great things he had been doing. Wedmore took the hostess in to dinner; I was on her other side, seeing things, bent on making the most of them. And I talked of critics, of Wedmore, as though I did not know who sat opposite.

And I was nudged, my foot kicked under the table. But I talked. And whenever the conversation turned on Méryon, or Wedmore's article, or other serious things, I told another story, and I laughed—ha ha !—and they couldn't help it, they all laughed with me, and Wedmore was forgotten, and I was the hero of the evening. And Wedmore has never forgiven me."

Whistler went a great deal to the theatre in the seventies and eighties, and was always at first nights. Occasionally he acted in amateur theatricals. In 1876 he played in *Under the Umbrella*, at the Albert Hall, and was elated by a paragraph on his performance in the *Daily News*. He showed himself at private views and at the ceremonies society approves. To see and to be seen was part of the social game, and the world, meeting him everywhere, mistook him for the Butterfly for which he seemed to pose.

CHAPTER XVI: THE PEACOCK ROOM. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-SEVEN.

For a year after the exhibition in Pall Mall, Whistler did not show any paintings. Artists said his pictures were not serious because not finished. Whistler retorted that theirs "might be finished, but—well—they never had been begun." Such remarks were not favoured by hanging committees. Probably Royal Academicians were honest, though malicious. Lord Redesdale remembered one whose work is forgotten, who used to say that Whistler was losing his eyesight, that he could not see there was no paint on his canvas. Mr. G. A. Holmes told us that a few artists in Chelsea, though they disliked him personally, thought him a man with new ideas who threw new light on art; Henry Moore said to Mr. Holmes that Whistler put more atmosphere into his pictures than any man living. But Academicians, as a rule, were afraid of him and Whistler would tell Mr. Holmes: "Well, you know, they want to treat me like a sheet of note-paper, and crumple me up !"

His prints were hung in exhibitions, many lent by Anderson Rose to the Liverpool Art Club in October 1874, and a few months afterwards to the Hartley Institution at Southampton. Shortly before the

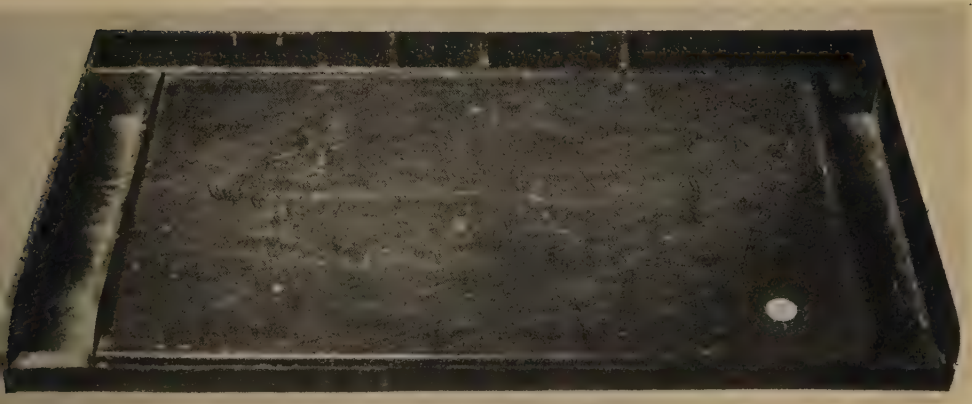
Liverpool show opened, Mr. Ralph Thomas issued the first catalogue of Whistler's etchings: *A Catalogue of the Etchings and Drypoints of James Abbott MacNeil Whistler, London, Privately Printed by John Russell Smith, of 36 Soho Square.* Of the fifty copies printed, only twenty-five were for sale, so that it became at once rare. Mr. Percy Thomas etched Whistler's portrait of himself with his brushes as frontispiece. Mr. Ralph Thomas described the plates, and as he had been with Whistler when many were made and printed, he was far better qualified than any of his successors. It is much to be regretted that Wedmore did not follow Thomas's excellent beginning.

In 1875, Whistler exhibited pictures in the few galleries that would hang him. In October he sent to the Winter Exhibition at the Dudley Gallery a *Nocturne in Blue and Gold, No. III.*, which is impossible to identify, and *Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket*, which Ruskin presently identified beyond possibility of doubt: the impression of fireworks in the gardens of Cremorne. But at the Dudley it created no sensation. F. G. Stephens, in the *Athenæum*, was almost alone in its praise. A month later, November 1875, *Chelsea Reach—Harmony in Grey*, and many studies of figures on brown paper were at the Winter Exhibition of the Society of French Artists, and three Nocturnes in the Spring Exhibition (1876) of the same Society. Thus Whistler managed without the Royal Academy.

When Irving appeared as Philip II. in 1874, Whistler was struck with the tall, slim, romantic figure in silvery greys and blacks, and got him to pose. Mr. Bernhard Sickert thinks it extraordinary that Whistler failed to suggest Irving's character. We think it more extraordinary for Mr. Sickert to forget that Whistler was painting Irving made up as Philip II. and not as Henry Irving. Mr. Cole saw the picture on May 5, 1876, and found Whistler "quite madly enthusiastic about his power of painting such full-lengths in two sittings or so." The reproduction in M. Duret's *Whistler* differs in so many details from the picture to-day, that at first we wondered if two portraits were painted. M. Duret tells us that his reproduction is from a photograph lent him by George Lucas. Probably, M. Duret writes, the photograph was taken while Whistler was painting the picture, which afterwards he must have altered. On comparing

SEA BEACH WITH FIGURES
STUDY FOR THE SIX PROJECTS
PASTEL

(*See page* 105)



WHISTLER'S TABLE PALETTE

(*See page* 115)

THE THREE FIGURES
PINK AND GREY
OIL
In the possession of Alfred Chapman, Esq.

(*See page* 105)

the photograph carefully with the picture, we do not believe there were two portraits, but there were many changes. In the photograph the cloak is thrown back over the actor's right shoulder, showing his arm. In the exhibited picture his arm is hidden by the cloak, and his hand, which before seems to have been thrust into his doublet, rests upon the collar of an order. The trunks, apparently, were much altered, especially the right, and the legs are far better drawn, the left foot entirely repainted. Though Whistler was acquiring more certainty in putting in these big portraits at once, he was becoming more exacting, and he made repeated changes. When the *Irving* was hung at the Grosvenor Gallery, Mrs. Stillman remembers that three different outlines of the figure were visible. The portrait was not a commission. It is said that Irving refused the small price Whistler asked for it, but later, seeing his legs sticking out from under a pile of canvasses in a Wardour Street shop, recognised them and bought the picture for ten guineas. Mr. Bram Stoker writes that, at the time of the bankruptcy, Whistler sold it to Irving " for either twenty or forty pounds—I forget which." The facts are that Whistler sold the *Irving* to Howell, for " ten pounds and a sealskin coat," Howell recorded in his diary, and that from him it passed into the hands of Mr. Graves, the printseller in Pall Mall, who sold it to Irving for one hundred pounds. After Irving's death, it came up for sale at Christie's, and fetched five thousand pounds, becoming the property of Mr. Thomas, of Philadelphia. On the death of Mr. Thomas it was purchased for the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

A portrait of Sir Henry Cole was begun this spring. Mr. Alan S. Cole, in his diary (May 19, 1876), speaks of " a strong commencement upon a nearly life-size portrait of my father. Looking at it reflected in a glass, and how the figure stood within the frame." This was never finished. Whistler's executrix says it was burned.

Lord Redesdale told us of a beautiful full-length of his wife in Chinese blue silk Whistler called fair, his word then for everything he liked. With two or three more sittings and a little work, it would have been finished. But it was a difficult moment, men were in possession at No. 2 Lindsey Row, and he slashed the canvas. The debt was small, thirty pounds or so, and the price agreed upon for the portrait was two hundred guineas. Lord Redesdale would gladly have settled

the matter, but Whistler said nothing. A portrait started of Lord Redesdale, in Van Dyck costume, and several Nocturnes were torn off stretchers and slashed. *The Fur Jacket, Rosa Corder, Connie Gilchrist with the Skipping Rope—The Gold Girl, Effie Deans*, were being painted. *The Fur Jacket, Arrangement in Black and Brown* his final name for it, is the portrait of Maud, Miss Franklin, who now becomes more important in his life and in his art. It is of great dignity. The dress is put in with a full, sweeping brush in long flowing lines, classic in the fall of the folds; the pale, beautiful face looks out like a flower from the depth of the background. In many portraits Whistler was rebuked for sacrificing the face to the design; here the interest is concentrated on the face, and that is why the shadowy figure has been criticised as a mere ghost, a mere rub-in of colour, on the canvas. That he carried the work as far as he thought it should be carried is certain when it is contrasted with *Rosa Corder*, also an *Arrangement in Black and Brown*, in which the jacket, the feathered hat in her hand, the trailing skirt, the face in severe profile, are more solidly modelled. M. Blanche has stated that Whistler, in Cheyne Walk, saw Miss Rosa Corder in her brown dress pass a door painted black, and was struck with the scheme of colour. This may be true, for, as we have shown, chance often suggested the effect or arrangement. *Connie Gilchrist—The Gold Girl*, a popular dancer at the Gaiety, attracted Whistler by her stage dress, which revealed her slight girlish form in its delicate youthful beauty. He posed her in the studio as he had seen her on the stage, skipping. But the movement which told on the stage by its simplicity, its spontaneity, became in the picture artificial. The figure has the elegance of the little pastels, it is placed with the distinction of the *Miss Alexander*, but the suspended action gives the sense of incompleteness. A long line swept down the back of the figure proves he meant to change it.

The above was written before the painting was bought by George A. Hearn and presented to the Metropolitan Museum of New York. Whistler for years had been endeavouring to get possession of it in order to destroy it. It had been seized at his bankruptcy, and for long was the property of Henry Labouchere. That Whistler was dissatisfied is shown by that long black line from the girl's head to her heels. After it had hung for some time in the Metropolitan Museum the line

was removed, and what is left of the picture Whistler wanted to destroy can now be seen on the walls.

Always the pictures he was painting were in his mind. He memorised them as he did the Nocturnes, and over and over, instead of telling what he was painting, he would make, to show those he knew would understand, pen or wash sketches of the work he was engaged on, leaving the sketches, many of which exist, with his friends. There are records of the kind of most of these portraits.

No portraits were shown in 1876, for other work engrossed him. It was the year of The Peacock Room.

We do not know how he got the idea of the peacock as a motive for decoration, or where he obtained his knowledge of it. But the scheme was first proposed to Mr. W. C. Alexander for his house on Campden Hill, and Whistler put down a few notes in pen and ink. The work went no further, and he arranged, instead, a harmony in white for the drawing-room, replaced afterwards by Eastern tapestries. Then Leyland bought his house in Prince's Gate. Leyland's ambition was to live the life of an ancient Venetian merchant in modern London, and he began to remodel the interior and fill it with beautiful things. He bought the gilded staircase from Northumberland House, which was being pulled down. He commissioned Whistler to suggest the colour in the hall, and paint the detail of blossom and leaf on the panels of the dado. "To Leyland's house to see Whistler's colouring of Hall—very delicate cocoa colour and gold—successful," Mr. Cole wrote, March 24. Leyland covered the walls of drawing- and reception-rooms with pictures. He had work by Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Crivelli. He owned Rossetti's *Blessed Damosel* and *Lady Lilith*, Millais' *Eve of St. Agnes*, Ford Madox Brown's *Chaucer at King Edward's Court*, Windus' *Burd Helen*, Burne-Jones' *Mirror of Venus* and *Wine of Circe*. He bought Legros, Watts, and Albert Moore. Whistler's *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* was his, and he hung it in the dining-room amidst his splendid collection of blue and white china.

Norman Shaw was making the alterations to the house, and another architect, Jeckyll, was suggested by Mr. Murray Marks to decorate the dining-room and arrange the blue and white. Some say that originally Morris and Burne-Jones were to do the dining-room, but that when Whistler stepped in they vanished. Jeckyll put up shelves

to hold the china, and Whistler designed the sideboard. The *Princesse* was placed over the mantel, and space left at the opposite end of the room for another painting by Whistler, who wished the *Three Figures, Pink and Grey* to face the *Princesse*. The walls were hung with Norwich leather. The shelves were divided by perpendicular lines endlessly repeated, and the panelled ceiling, with its pendant lamps, was heavy. Whistler maintained that the red border of the rug and the red flowers in the centre of each panel of the leather killed the delicate tones of his picture. Leyland agreed. The red border was cut off the rug, and Whistler gilded, or painted, the flowers on the leather with yellow and gold. The result was horrible; the yellow paint and gilding "swore" at the yellow tone of the leather. Something else must be done, and again Leyland agreed. The something else developed into the scheme of decoration first submitted to Mr. Alexander: The Peacock Room.

He told us one evening, when talking of it: "Well, you know, I just painted as I went on, without design or sketch—it grew as I painted. And towards the end I reached such a point of perfection—putting in every touch with such freedom—that when I came round to the corner where I had started, why, I had to paint part of it over again, or the difference would have been too marked. And the harmony in blue and gold developing, you know, I forgot everything in my joy in it!"

He had planned a journey to Venice, and new series of etchings there and in France and Holland. The journey was postponed. At the end of the season, the Leylands went to Speke Hall. Whistler remained at Prince's Gate. Town emptied, he was still there, spending his days on ladders and scaffolding, or lying in a hammock painting. His two pupils helped him: "We laid on the gold," Mr. Walter Greaves says, and there were times when the three were found with their hair and faces covered with it. Whistler's description of this whirlwind of work was "the show's afire," an expression he used for years when things were going. He was up before six, at Prince's Gate an hour or so after, at noon jumping into a hansom and driving home to lunch, then hurrying back to his work. At night he was fit for nothing but bed, "so full were my eyes of sleep and peacock feathers," he told us. He thought only of the beauty growing in his hands. Autumn came. Lionel Robinson and Sir Thomas Sutherland, with

NOCTURNE
BLUE AND GREEN
OIL
In the National Gallery, London

(*See page* 112)

NOCTURNE

BLUE AND SILVER

OIL

In the possession of the Executors of Mrs. F. R. Leyland

(*See page* 112)

whom he was to have gone to Venice, started without him. He could not drop the work at Prince's Gate.

A record of his progress is in the short notes of Mr. Cole's diary:

"*September* 11 (1876). Whistler dined. Most entertaining with his brilliant description of his successful decorations at Leyland's.

"*September* 20. To see Peacock Room. Peacock feather devices—blues and golds—extremely new and original.

"*October* 26. To see room which is developing. The dado and panels greatly help it. Met Poynter, who spoke highly of Whistler's decoration.

"*October* 27. Again to see room with Moody. He did not like the varnished surface and blocky manner of laying on the gold.

"*October* 29. To Peacock Room. Mitford (Lord Redesdale) came.

"*November* 10. The blue over the brown (leather) background is most admirable in effect, and the ornament in gold on blue fine. W. quite mad with excitement.

"*November* 20. With Prince Teck to see Whistler and the room. Left P. T. with Jimmy.

"*November* 29. Golden Peacocks promise to be superb.

"*December* 4. Peacocks superb.

"*December* 8. Article in *Morning Post* on Peacock Room.

"*December* 9. Whistler in a state over article in *Morning Post*. Leyland much perturbed as I heard.

"*December* 15. Whistler now thinking of cutting off the pendant ceiling lamps in Peacock Room.

"*December* 17. My father and Probyn to see room. Jimmy much disgusted at my father's telling him that, in taking so much pains over his work, and in the minuteness of his etched work, he really was like Mulready, who was equally scrupulous."

Lord Redesdale told us that, returning from Scotland, he went to Prince's Gate. Whistler was on top of a ladder, looking like a little imp—a gnome.

"But what are you doing?"

"I am doing the loveliest thing you ever saw!"

"But what of the beautiful old Spanish leather? And Leyland? Have you consulted him?"

"Why should I? I am doing the most beautiful thing that ever has been done, you know, the most beautiful room!"

Everybody wanted to see it. Whistler held a succession of receptions at Prince's Gate. He was flattered when the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Westminster came, he wrote to his mother at Hastings, for they set the fashion, kept up the talk in London. Boughton said in his *Reminiscences:* "He often asked me round to The Peacock Room, and I see him still up on high, lying on his back often, working in 'gold on blue' and 'blue on gold' over the whole expanse of the ceiling, and, as far as I could see, he let no hand touch it but his own." Mrs. Stillman, however, remembers the two pupils working while she drank tea with Whistler. Lady Ritchie let us have her impressions of a visit:

"Long, long after the Paris days, Mr. Whistler danced when I would rather have talked. Some one, I cannot remember who, it was probably one of Mr. Cole's family, told me one day when I was walking up Prince's Gate that he was decorating a house by which we were passing, and asked me if I should like to go in. We found ourselves—it was like a dream—in a beautiful Peacock Room, full of lovely lights and tints, and romantic, dazzling effects. James Whistler, in a painter's smock, stood at one end of the room at work. Seeing us, he laid down his brushes, and greeted us warmly, and I talked of old Paris days to him. 'I used to ask you to dance,' he said, 'but you liked talking best.' To which I answered, 'No, indeed, I liked dancing best,' and suddenly I found myself whirling half-way down the room."

Jeckyll came, and his visit was tragic. When he saw what had been done to his work, he hurried home, gilded his floor, and forgot his grief in a mad-house.

Whistler received the critics on February 9, 1877. A leaflet, for distribution, was written, it is said, by Whistler, though the wording does not suggest it, and printed by Thomas Way. It explains that, with the Peacocks as motive, two patterns, derived from the eyes and the breast feathers, were invented and repeated throughout, sometimes one alone, sometimes both in combination; along the dado, blue on gold, over the walls, gold on blue, while the arrangement was completed by the birds, painted in their splendour, in blue on the gold shutters, in gold on the blue space opposite the chimney-place.

"Called and found Whistler elated with the praises of the Press of The Peacock Room," is Mr. Cole's note on the 18th of the month. Even then it was not finished. On March 5, Mr. Cole was "late at Prince's Gate with Whistler, consoling him. He trying to finish the peacocks on shutters. With him till 2 A.M., and walked home."

Whistler made no change in the architectural construction of the room. It was far from beautiful, with its perpendicular lines, its heavy ceiling, its hanging lamps, and its spaces so broken up that only on the wall opposite the *Princesse* and on the shutters could he carry out his design in its full splendour and stateliness, and give gorgeousness of form as well as colour; only there could he paint the peacocks that were his motive, so that it is by artificial light, with the shutters closed, that the room is seen in completeness. He could do no more than adapt in marvellous fashion the eye of the peacock, the throat and breast feathers to the broken surfaces. But in spite of drawbacks, The Peacock Room is the "noble work" he called it to his mother, the one perfect mural decoration of modern times. It was his first chance, and it is a lasting reproach to his contemporaries that there was no one to offer him another until too late.

Whistler, who in his pictures avoided literary themes, resorted to symbolism in his gold peacocks on the wall facing the *Princesse*. One, standing amid flying feathers and gold, clutches in his claws a pile of coins; the other spreads his wings in angry but triumphant defiance: "the Rich Peacock and the Poor Peacock," Whistler said, symbolising the relations between patron and artist.

Leyland had been away from Prince's Gate for months. He had seen his beautiful leather disappear beneath Whistler's blue and gold. He had heard of receptions and press views to which no invitations had been issued by him or to him, and he was annoyed at having his private house turned into a public gallery. The crisis came when Whistler, thinking himself justified by months of work, asked two thousand guineas for the decoration of the room. Leyland, who had sanctioned only the retouching of the leather, could restrain himself no longer. Like many generous men, he had a strict, if narrow, sense of justice. The original understanding was that Whistler should receive five hundred guineas. This grew to a thousand as the scheme developed. But when, at the end, Whistler demanded two thousand, and there

was no contract, Leyland sent Whistler one thousand pounds, not even guineas. To Whistler this was an insult. He felt he had been treated not as an artist, but as a tradesman. He never forgave Leyland, though, at one moment, Leyland was prepared to pay the whole sum if Whistler would leave the house. Whistler refused, preferring to make Leyland a gift of the decoration than not finish the panel of the Peacocks, and he told Mr. Cole:

"You know, there Leyland will sit at dinner, his back to the *Princesse*, and always before him the apotheosis of *l'art et l'argent!*"

And this was what happened. Leyland knew that, in return for the loss of his leather and his irritation with Whistler, he had been given something beautiful, and he kept the dining-room as Whistler left it, toning down not a flying feather, not a piece of gold in that triumphant caricature. Until the colour fades from the panel, the world cannot forget the quarrel. Whistler never forgot it, and his resentment against Leyland never lessened. It may be that he was over-sensitive, certainly he put himself in the wrong by his conduct to Leyland. But he could no more help his manner of avenging what he thought an insult, than the meek man can refrain from turning the other cheek to the chastiser. It will ever be to Leyland's credit that he left the work alone.

A few years ago the room was removed from the house in Prince's Gate, bought by Messrs. Brown and Phillips, sold by them to Messrs. Obach, who exhibited it in their Bond Street gallery, and it was then purchased by Mr. Charles L. Freer and taken to Detroit. As he owns the *Princesse*, The Peacock Room is probably once again just as it was when Whistler finished it.

CHAPTER XVII: THE GROSVENOR GALLERY. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-SEVEN AND EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT.

Many exhibitions had been organised in opposition to the Royal Academy, but on too small a scale to contend against that rich and powerful institution. Sir Coutts Lindsay, the founder of the Grosvenor Gallery, brought to it money, a talent for organisation, and a deter-

mination to show the best work in the right way. Nothing could have been more in accord with Whistler's ideas. He dropped in to smoke with Mr. Cole on the evening of March 19, 1876, "in great excitement over Sir Coutts Lindsay's gallery for pictures—very select exhibition, which he carried to an extreme by saying that it might be opened with only one picture worthy of being shown that season." Sir Coutts Lindsay proposed to exhibit no pictures save those he invited, and he might have succeeded had he ignored the Academy, and made the Grosvenor as distinct from it as the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers was under Whistler's presidency. He had the daring to invite Whistler, Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, Walter Crane, Watts; but the weakness to include Millais, Alma-Tadema, Poynter, Richmond, Leighton. "To those whose work he wanted, he gave little dinners," Mr. Hallé has told us, and a very strange lot some of them seemed to Sir Coutts probably, to his butler certainly. One evening the butler could endure it no longer, and he came into the drawing-room and whispered: "There's a gent downstairs says 'e 'as come to dinner, wot's forgot 'is necktie and stuck a fevver in his 'air," for at this period Whistler, Mr. Hallé says, never wore a necktie when in evening dress. The white lock bewildered others. Mrs. Leyland remembered his going to her box at the opera once, where the attendant leaned over and said: "Beg your pardon, sir, but there's a white feather in your hair, just on top!"

At first, Burne-Jones and the followers of the Pre-Raphaelites were most in evidence at Sir Coutts Lindsay's exhibitions, and the "greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery" element prevailed. But the Grosvenor, by the time its traditions were taken over by the New Gallery, was little more than an overflow from the Academy.

Shortly before the first exhibition in 1877, Whistler's brother, the doctor, was married to Miss Helen Ionides, a cousin of Aleco and Luke Ionides. The wedding (April 17, 1877) was at St. George's, Hanover Square, and the Greek Church, London Wall. It brought to Whistler a good friend for the troubled years that were to come, and Mrs. Whistler's house in Wimpole Street was for long a home to him.

The first Grosvenor was a loan exhibition, and opened in May 1877. Whistler sent *Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket* shown

at the Dudley; *Harmony in Amber and Black*, the first title of *The Fur Jacket; Arrangement in Brown;* Irving as Philip II. of Spain, with the title *Arrangement in Black, No. III.* From Mrs. Leyland came *Nocturne in Blue and Silver;* from Mr. W. Graham another *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*—changed later by Whistler to *Blue and Gold, Old Battersea Bridge*, now at the Tate Gallery; from the Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham, *Nocturne in Blue and Gold*, at Westminster. The *Carlyle* was included, but it arrived too late to be catalogued. Boehm lent his bust of Whistler in terra-cotta, done in 1872, considered at the time a good portrait.

Whistler's work was also seen in a frieze, described by Mr. Walter Crane: "Whistler designed the frieze—the phases of the moon on the coved ceiling of the West Gallery which has disappeared since its conversion into the Æolian Hall, with stars on a subdued blue ground, the moon and stars being brought out in silver, the frieze being divided into panels by the supports of the glass roof. The 'phases' were sufficiently separated from each other."

We have heard of this decoration from no one else. Probably it was overshadowed by the crimson silk damask and green velvet hangings, the gilded pilasters and furniture, the monumental chimneypiece, of which complaints were heard from every side. The sumptuousness of the background was disastrous to the pictures. Whistler's suffered less than others, but were not liked the more on that account. Before the private view (April 30, 1877), Sir Coutts Lindsay had expressed his disappointment in the *Irving* and the Nocturnes. At the private view the crowd gathered in front of Alma-Tadema, Burne-Jones, Millais, Leighton, Poynter, Richmond. The critics sneered at Whistler, or patronised him. The *Athenæum* grudged meagre lines to this "whimsical, if capable, artist and his vagaries." The *Times* smiled with condescension at "Mr. Whistler's compartment, musical with strange Nocturnes," wondered how Irving enjoyed "being reduced to a mere arrangement," and deplored the theory that, in practice, covered "an entire absence of details, even details generally considered so important to a full-length portrait as arms and legs. In fact, Mr. Whistler's full-length arrangements suggest to us a choice between materialised spirits and figures in a London fog."

But no criticism was so insolent as the notice of the Grosvenor which

Ruskin delivered from his circulating pulpit, *Fors Clavigera* (July 2, 1877).

Ruskin, though social subjects engrossed him, was still the art critic powerful to the public, to himself infallible. He had made the Pre-Raphaelites, he set to work to unmake Whistler. Already he was attacked by the mental malady, the "morbid excitement" in Mr. Collingwood's words, that obscured the last years of his life; he had been very ill in the winter of 1877. Nothing else could pardon his malice and insolence. He reserved his chief abuse for Whistler's *Falling Rocket at Cremorne*, with the sudden burst of fire and shower of gold and detail disappearing in the illimitable darkness of night. That fireworks in a place of entertainment could have in them the elements of beauty was a truth Ruskin could not grasp, and with this wonderful canvas before him, he remained blind to the splendour of the subject and the mastery of the painter: "I have seen and heard much of cockney impudence before now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face."

Boughton, in his *Reminiscences*, tells that Whistler first chanced upon this criticism when they were alone together in the smoking-room of the Arts Club. "It is the most debased style of criticism I have had thrown at me yet," Whistler said. "Sounds rather like libel," Boughton suggested. "Well—that I shall try to find out!" Whistler replied.

Till now, his answer to abuse of his work had been the lash of his wit. But if critics had tried him by their stupidity, never, before Ruskin, had they outraged him by their venom. The insult appeared in a widely read print; he sought redress in the most public fashion possible in England, and sued Ruskin for libel.

The immediate result was that he found it harder to sell his pictures. To buy his Nocturnes was to be ridiculed, Mr. Rawlinson, one of the few who risked it, assures us. Whistler laughed away the new anxiety, and devoted more time to black-and-white. He had hoped to go to Venice, but the preparations for the trial kept him in London. And now Howell made himself as useful to Whistler as he had been to Rossetti:

"Well, you know, it happened one summer evening, in those old

days when there was real summer, I was sitting looking out of the window in Lindsey Row, and there was Howell passing, and Rosa Corder was with him. And I called to them and they came in, and Howell said: 'Why, you have etched many plates, haven't you? You must get them out, you must print them, you must let me see to them—there's gold waiting. And you have a press!' And so I had, in a room upstairs, only it was rusty, it hadn't been used for so long. But Howell wouldn't listen to an objection. He said he would fix up the press, he would pull it. And there was no escape. And the next morning, there we all were, Rosa Corder, too, and Howell was pulling at the wheel, and there were basins of water, and paper being damped, and prints being dried, and then Howell was grinding more ink, and, with the plates under my fingers, I felt all the old love of it come back. In the afternoon Howell would go and see Graves, the printseller, and there were orders flying about, and cheques—it was all amazing, you know! Howell profited, of course. But he was so superb. One evening we had left a pile of eleven prints just pulled, and the next morning only five were there. 'It's very strange,' Howell said, 'we must have a search. No one could have taken them but me, and that, you know, is impossible!'" There is a record of this period in the etching, *Lady at a Window*, with Rosa Corder, or Maud, by the garret window, looking at a print, the press behind her.

It was a period of what he called his "fiendish slavery to the press." There were new plates. In 1878 *St. James's Street* was reproduced by lithography in the "Season Number" of *Vanity Fair*. The *Athenæum* objected to it because it was "not done as Leech or Hogarth would have done it." The *World* mistook the reproduction for the original, and so invited from Whistler one of the letters following each other fast: "Atlas has the wisdom of ages, and need not grieve himself with mere matters of art." *Adam and Eve—Old Chelsea* has a special interest, for it marks the transition from his early manner in the Thames Set to the later handling in the Venetian. A plate was made from the *Irving as Philip of Spain*, the only portrait Whistler reproduced on copper, and it was not a success. His plates of Jo and Maud were never from pictures, though often studies for pictures he proposed to paint. The dry-point of his *Mother* has no relation to the portrait. He was bored to death with copying himself, he would say, and, twenty years

afterwards, when he undertook a lithograph of his *Montesquiou* and failed, he said that "it was impossible to produce the same masterpiece twice over," that "the inspiration would not come," that when he was not working at a new thing from Nature he was not applying himself, "it was as difficult as for a hen to lay the same egg twice."

In 1878 he made his first experiments in lithography. His attention had been called to it by Mr. Thomas Way, who did more than any other man to revive the art in England. Lithography, appropriated by commerce, was almost forgotten as a means of artistic expression. In France, it was given over for cheaper and quicker methods of illustration; in England it was overweighted by the ponderous performances of Haghe and Nash, hedged about by trade unions, and reduced to the perfection of commonplace. Lithographers here and there preserved its best traditions and regretted the degradation. Mr. Thomas Way determined to interest artists again in a medium that had yielded such splendid results. He prepared stones for them, explained processes, and would not hear of difficulties. Some artists experimented, but lithography did not pay while the anecdote in paint fetched a fortune. Mr. Way appealed to Whistler, who tried the stone, grasped its possibilities, and was delighted. In his first five lithographs he did things never attempted before and found the medium adapted to him. He made nine this year on the stone, though his later work was mostly done on lithographic paper. He proposed to publish this first series as *Art Notes*, but there was no demand, and the plan fell through. *The Toilet* and the *Broad Bridge* were printed in *Piccadilly* (1878), edited by Mr. Watts-Dunton, and they had hardly appeared when the magazine came to an end. Neither Whistler nor lithography then meant success for any enterprise.

In 1878, the *Catalogue of Blue and White Nankin Porcelain Forming the Collection of Sir Henry Thompson* was published. Mr. Murray Marks and Mr. W. C. Alexander own delicate little designs of blue and white by Whistler for Mr. Marks, but never used. They were a good preparation for the drawings which, in collaboration with Sir Henry Thompson, he made to illustrate the Catalogue. Some are in brown, some in blue, reproduced by the Autotype Company. Nineteen of the twenty-six are by Whistler, simple and direct, the modelling in the drawing by the brush as the Japanese would have given it. As a rule

there are neither shadows nor attempts at relief. The series is a refutation of the assertion that he could not draw. Whenever he attempted drawing of this sort, or etchings like *The Wine Glass*, he eclipsed Jacquemart and all his contemporaries. Worried, anxious, the libel case hanging over him, his debts increasing, the general distrust in his work growing, Whistler, nevertheless, gave to the catalogue his usual care. We have seen another set of the drawings, which differ slightly from those reproduced, and with which, evidently, he was not satisfied. The book was edited by Mr. Murray Marks, and issued by Messrs. Ellis and White, of 29 New Bond Street, in May, and Mr. Marks exhibited the drawings and the porcelain, with the book, in his shop, 395 Oxford Street. The show was not a success, the book was a loss, though only two hundred and twenty copies were printed. Now it is almost impossible to get.

Of personal notice, Whistler had more than enough. He was caricatured this year in *The Grasshopper* at the Gaiety—it was in the days of Edward Terry and Nellie Farren. A large full-length, thought by many more a portrait than a caricature, was painted by Carlo Pellegrini, an Italian artist who lived in England and, under the names of " Singe " and " Ape," contributed to *Vanity Fair* caricatures which, unlike the characterless, artless scrawls of his more popular amateur successors, were works of art and, therefore, appreciated by Whistler. The painting shows Whistler in evening dress, no necktie, and a gold chain to his monocle ; and in a scene parodying the studios and artists of the day, it was pushed in on an easel, some say by Pellegrini, with the announcement, " Here is the inventor of black-and-white ! " It was a failure, and no wonder. It was impossible to see the point. The painting now belongs to Mr. John W. Simpson of New York. Whistler was also caricatured in *Vanity Fair* by " Spy," Leslie Ward, then rapidly rivalling " Ape " in popularity, and to be so caricatured was, in London, to achieve notoriety.

To the second Grosvenor in 1878 he sent, in defiance to Ruskin, another series of Nocturnes, Harmonies, and Arrangements. Among them was the *Arrangement in White and Black, No. I.*, the large, full-length portrait of Miss Maud Franklin, that sometimes figures in catalogues and articles as *L'Américaine*. We believe it was never shown in England again. It passed in the early eighties into the collection

of Dr. Linde, at Lübeck, where it remained until 1904, was then sold through Paris dealers to an American, and remains one of the least known of Whistler's large full-lengths. We saw it in the spring of 1904 at M. Duret's apartment in the Rue Vignon. It is the only portrait, except the *Connie Gilchrist* and *The Yellow Buskin*, in which Whistler attempted to give movement to the figure. Miss Franklin wears a white gown in the ugly fashion of the late seventies, and walks forward, one hand on her hip, the other holding up her skirt. But she fails to fulfil Whistler's precept that the figure must keep within the frame. She seems walking out of the depths of the background, breaking through the envelope of atmosphere. The problem was difficult, an unusual one for Whistler, and, interesting as is the result, the portrait hardly ranks with the greatest. When shown in 1878, it did not help to reconcile the critics. The *Athenæum* said: "Mr. Whistler is in great force. Last year some of his life-size portraits were without feet; here we have a curiously shaped young lady, ostentatiously showing her foot, which is a pretty large one." It was a "vaporous full-length" in the opinion of the *Times*, babbling nonsense about the Nocturnes and glad to turn from Whistler's "diet of fog to the broad table of substantial landscape spread for us by Cecil G. Lawson." Whistler contributed a drawing of the *Arrangement in White and Black* to Blackburn's *Grosvenor Notes*, an illustrated catalogue published for the first time in 1878. For many years Whistler made these little sketches in pen and ink after his pictures for illustrated catalogues, and for papers that illustrated notices of the exhibitions, an aid to the identification of works where the titles fail.

CHAPTER XVIII: THE WHITE HOUSE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT.

In the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878, Whistler's only exhibit was the section of a room that may have been his design for Mr. Alexander, or more likely was his decoration for the White House which E. W. Godwin, the architect, was building for him in Tite Street, Chelsea. He called it a *Harmony in Yellow and Gold*, and others spoke of it as the *Primrose Room*. It seems to have been simply a room painted in

gold and yellow, the peacock pattern again used, but this time in gold on yellow and yellow on gold. There was simple furniture in yellow of a darker tone than the walls, also a chimneypiece which, twelve years or so afterwards, was found by Mr. Pickford Waller in a second-hand furniture shop and bought. The stove was taken out; two panels, with a pattern suggested for the dado, were turned into doors, and the chimneypiece is now a cabinet with Whistler's decorations almost untouched.

A few years ago Messrs. Obach had in their possession a set of glass panels for a door from the house of Anderson Rose, stated to be by Whistler, but there is no evidence of Whistler's work in them. Recently a set of Empire chairs were shown in New York said to have been decorated by Whistler for Wickham Flower, and so described at Christie's where they were sold, but Messrs. Christie do not guarantee the articles in their sales. To those who know Whistler's work there was no trace of it in the chairs, and we have it on Mrs. Flower's authority that the decorations were by Henry Treffy Dunn.

Mr. Sheridan Ford, in the suppressed edition of *The Gentle Art*, writes that, at Sir Thomas Sutherland's request, Whistler designed a scheme of decoration for his house, but that its "startling novelty caused such evident anxiety," Whistler carried it no further. Some houses he did decorate later on—those of Mrs. William Whistler, Mr. William Heinemann, Senor Sarasate, Mrs. Walter Sickert, Mrs. D'Oyly Carte, Mr. Menpes. But the decoration was simply the colour-scheme. Whistler mixed the colour, which was usually put on by house-painters. He frequently suggested the furniture, but of design, as in The Peacock Room, there was nothing, not even in any of his own houses after the White House. To one friend, thinking of decorating, who asked his advice, his answer was, "Well, first burn all your furniture." Often he gave elaborate directions as to what colours should be used and how they were to be applied. Mrs. D'Oyly Carte wrote us:

"It would not be quite correct to say that Mr. Whistler designed the decorations of my house, because it is one of the old Adam houses in Adelphi Terrace, and it contained the original Adam ceiling in the drawing-room and a number of the old Adam mantelpieces, which Mr. Whistler much admired, as he did also some of the cornices, doors

THE MOTHER

ARRANGEMENT IN GREY AND BLACK

OIL

In the Musée du Luxembourg

(*See page* 118)

PORTRAIT OF THOMAS CARLYLE
ARRANGEMENT IN GREY AND BLACK. NO. II
OIL
In the Corporation Art Gallery, Glasgow

(*See page* 119)

and other things. What he did do was to design a colour-scheme for the house, and he mixed the colours for distempering the walls in each case, leaving only the painters to *apply* them. In this way he got the exact shade he wanted, which made all the difference, as I think the difficulty in getting any painting satisfactorily done is that painters simply have their stock shades which they show you to choose from, and none of them seem to be the kind of shades that Mr. Whistler managed to achieve by the mixing of his ingredients. He distempered the whole of the staircase light pink; the dining-room a different and deeper shade; the library he made one of those yellows he had in his drawing-room at the Vale, a sort of primrose which seemed as if the sun was shining, however dark the day, and he painted the woodwork with it green, but not like the ordinary painters' green at all. He followed the same scheme in the other rooms. His idea was to make the house gay and delicate in colour."

When he left No. 2 Lindsey Row he suggested the colour arrangement throughout the house for the new tenants, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Morse, got his man Cossens to do the distempering, and, Mrs. Morse writes us, " was so afraid that we should do it wrongly that he personally superintended the work and mixed the colour himself, though in consequence of this a whole wash for the dining-room was spoilt, as he forgot to stir it up at the right moment. There was great discussion about gold size."

To decoration Whistler applied his scientific method of painting, and on his walls, as in his pictures, black was often the basis. Colour for him was as much decoration as pattern was for William Morris, and in the use of flat colour for wall decoration Whistler has triumphed. His theory of interior decoration, though people do not realise it, has been universally adopted, even his use of distemper, in which he was only carrying on the beautiful tradition of whitewashing walls. Not only can this simple scheme be made more appropriate as a background than Morris' hangings and stencillings, but it has the virtue of utility and cheapness, which Morris for ever preached but never practised. In the painting of pictures, the idea of the Pre-Raphaelites was decoration —that is, convention. Their decoration was either wilfully or ignorantly founded on the realism of the Middle Ages. The great decorators of Italy were the realists of their day, their realism, except in the case

of the greatest, Piero della Francesca, is now regarded as convention, and it is the Pre-Raphaelites who stirred up these dead bones. In France, Puvis de Chavannes developed Italian methods, adapting them to modern subjects and modern wants, retaining the convention of flatness and simplicity. Whistler believed that a portrait or a Nocturne should be as decorative as a conventional design; that, by the arrangement of his subjects, and by their colour, they should be made decorative, and not by conventional setting and conventional lines. He also believed that walls should be in flat tones and not covered with pattern. Pictures then placed upon them were shown properly and did not struggle with the pattern. Lady Archibald Campbell writes us a few lines proving that he could make people understand his aims when they were willing to learn from him:

"The fundamental principles of decorative art with which Whistler impressed me, related to the necessity of applying scientific methods to the treatment of all decorative work; that to produce harmonious effects in line and colour grouping, the whole plan or scheme should have to be thoroughly thought out so as to be *finished* before it was practically begun. I think he proved his saying to be true, that the fundamental principles of decorative art, as in all art, are based on laws as exact as those of the known sciences. He concluded that what the knowledge of a fundamental base has done for music, a similarly demonstrative method must do for painting. The musical vocabulary which he used to distinguish his creations always struck me as singularly appropriate, though he had no knowledge of music."

Before the Ruskin case came into court, the idea of opening an *atelier* for students occurred to Whistler, and it was because the painting room at No. 2 Lindsey Row was too small that he asked Godwin to build the house, ever since known as the White House, in Tite Street. Up to this time he had never had a studio in Chelsea. His pictures had been painted in rooms without a top-light, partly, no doubt, that he might paint his sitters under natural conditions. Even in his later studios of the Rue Notre-Dame des Champs in Paris, and Fitzroy Street in London, shades and screens were drawn so that the light might come in as from an ordinary window. He was trying to put the figure into the atmosphere that surrounded it, not to cut it out of this atmosphere. But he needed more space for the *atelier*,

which promised success. Among artists, there were always a few who believed in Whistler. Duranty only expressed the prevailing feeling when, in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (1878), he referred to Whistler's influence on British painters represented in the Universal Exhibition.

The White House, low, three-storeyed, simple in ornament, is modest compared to many houses in Tite Street. It has been much changed, but the general plan survives. When it was built, it shared the fate, of everything associated with Whistler. The white brick of the walls, the green slate of the roof, the stone facings, the blue door and woodwork were as "eccentric" and "fantastic" as Whistler himself to art-critical journalists. To architectural papers they were the cause of debate and calling of names. To the Metropolitan Board of Works the simplicity of design was suspiciously plain, and mouldings in specified places were insisted upon in return for the licence to build. Discussion followed discussion, because the studio was the most important feature of the interior and placed at the top of the house, because windows and doors were made where they were wanted "and not with Baker Street regularity," because Godwin and Whistler liked the lovely effect of the green tiles with the white walls. Harry Quilter, who bought the house in 1879 and altered it, probably ruined the colour-scheme which Whistler had arranged, and the interior decoration, if it was ever carried out, does not now exist.

Whistler's tenancy of the Lindsey Row house came to an end on June 25 (1878), but he could not leave it in time for the new tenants. He did not get out of the studio until October. It was surprising that he moved at all. The moment was one of debts and difficulties. He was alone. His mother was ill at Hastings, he had just broken his engagement with Leyland's sister-in-law,* and he had quarrelled with Leyland. The criticism of the last few years told severely upon the sale of his pictures—upon himself. Howell, who had "started cheques and orders flying about" and attended to business details, kept a diary during part of 1877 and all of 1878. To look through it is to share Whistler's indignation that so great an artist should be reduced to such shifts. In Kensington and St. John's Wood palaces, Academicians could not turn pictures out fast enough for the competing crowd;

* Mrs. Leyland told us of this engagement. We know nothing more about it.

Whistler was often compelled to borrow a few shillings. There are legends of his taking a hansom and driving to find somebody to lend him half a crown to pay for it, and before he had found anybody and could get rid of the cab the fare had mounted to half a guinea. Howell's diary shows that he had to raise money before he could lend it to Whistler. Sometimes larger sums than he could manage were arranged by Anderson Rose, Whistler's patron and solicitor. As "ill and worried," Howell describes Whistler on one of the visits to Mr. Rose, and there was every reason he should be. A Mr. Blott figures in other transactions. Whistler's letters to him have been sold and published, and it would be useless to ignore their relations. Money for the White House had to be obtained. To Mr. Blott he gave his *Carlyle* as security for a hundred and fifty pounds, agreeing to pay interest, offering other pictures as security if a sum of four hundred could be advanced. Cheques were protested, writs were threatened. The pictures he could not sell went wandering about as hostages. The *Mother* for awhile was with Mrs. Noseda, the Strand printseller. We have heard that she would have sold it for a hundred pounds. Mr. Rawlinson, who saw it either there or at Mr. Graves', has told us that nobody could have bought it under such circumstances, after having seen it in Whistler's bedroom, where it had hung and been shown by him with reverence. When Whistler heard that Mrs. Noseda was offering the picture for this price, he is said to have gone at once to remonstrate, and by his vehemence to have made her ill.

One man who helped him through these troubled times was Henry Graves, head of the firm in Pall Mall. Graves, introduced to Whistler by Howell, agreed to engrave the portrait of Carlyle in mezzotint, and Howell bought the copyright of the engraving from Whistler for eighty pounds and six proofs. W. Josey was commissioned to make the plate. Three hundred signed proofs of a first state were to be printed. The plate would not stand so large an edition ; it was steel-faced and, as the steel-facing of mezzotint was not possible, turned out a failure. The attempt to remove the steel ruined the ground, and Josey had to be called in to go over it again. In the first state, the floor was perfectly smooth, but, the steel-facing taken off, a spot appeared in the plate, which never could be got out and remained there through the edition. After every seventy proofs printed, Josey

PORTRAIT OF CICELY HENRIETTA, MISS ALEXANDER
HARMONY IN GREY AND GREEN
In the National Gallery, London

(*See page* 121)

PORTRAIT OF F. R. LEYLAND
ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK
OIL
In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art
(*See page* 124)

had to work on the plate and bring it back, as well as he could, to its original condition. Whistler did not like the first proofs and offered to show the printers how to do them. Mr. A. Graves went with him to Holdgate's, the printer, in London Street. Whistler brought his own ink, put on an apron, inked the plate as he would an etched one, while the whole shop looked on. When the plate, wiped and ready, was put through the press, it came out a shadow, the ink being far too weak. Whistler did not try a second time. Mr. Graves preserved the proof, writing on it that Whistler pulled it, and sold it for three guineas, to whom he does not remember. Eventually Whistler was satisfied, for Howell, on December 2, 1878, gave Whistler what he calls his first proof, and the diary says: "Whistler and the Doctor were delighted." It is also recorded in the diary that one of Whistler's six proofs was sold to Lord Beaconsfield.

The print of the *Carlyle* was very successful. At Howell's suggestion, Graves agreed to give Whistler a thousand pounds for a portrait of Disraeli, and the copyright: a plate to be made from it also.

Mr. Alan S. Cole says Whistler went to see Disraeli:

"*September* 19 (1878). Called on J., who told me of his interview with Lord Beaconsfield as to painting a portrait of him. He had been down at Hughenden—saw the old gentleman, who, however, declined."

Whistler's version was:

"Everything was most wonderful. We were the two artists together—recognising each other at a glance! 'If I sit to any one, it will be to you, Mr. Whistler,' were Disraeli's last words as he left me at the gate. And then he sat to Millais!"

This scheme falling through, Graves commissioned Josey to engrave the *Mother*, and afterwards the *Rosa Corder*, painted as a commission from Howell. Whistler told us he offered the portrait as a present to Howell, who declined and insisted on paying a hundred guineas for it, the amount entered in Howell's diary as paid to Whistler on September 9, 1878. It was sold to R. A. Canfield in 1903 for two thousand pounds, and now belongs to Mr. Henry C. Frick. Though these mezzotints were successful when published, collectors thought as little of them as they did at the time of those of a century earlier, and for years proofs signed by both artist and engraver could be picked up for less than the published price.

After the two pictures had been engraved by Josey, Howell deposited in the same way three of the Nocturnes with Graves: *The Falling Rocket*, *The Fire Wheel*, *Old Battersea Bridge—Blue and Gold*, and also *The Fur Jacket*. These pictures were not engraved. Whistler had not a minute to spare from legal troubles and impatient creditors. "Poor J. turned up depressed—very hard up, and fearful of getting old," Mr. Cole wrote in his diary for October 16, 1878. Whistler had reason for depression. It was now that Howell's diary records his purchase of the *Irving* for ten pounds and a sealskin coat. There is nothing more tragic in the story of Rembrandt's bankruptcy.

CHAPTER XIX: THE TRIAL. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT.

The action Whistler *v.* Ruskin, was heard on November 25–26, 1878.

John Ruskin, leader of taste, critic of art, prophet, and propounder of the gospel of "the Beautiful," led not only a devout following, but that enormous public which believes blindly in Britons. Whistler knew that either he or Ruskin must settle the question whether an artist may paint what he wants in his own way, though this may not be understood by the patron, the critic, the Academy, or the real British judge, the man in the street; whether the artist should rule or be ruled. The case was, Whistler said, "between the Brush and the Pen." His motives were ignored, the proceedings made a jest, and the verdict treated as a farce. Few could, or do, realise that he was in earnest, that the trial was a defence of his principles, and the verdict a justification of his belief.

At the time Whistler was to the British public a charlatan, a mountebank. Ruskin was to the People a preacher, the professor of art. Whistler denied the right of Ruskin, master of English literature populariser of pictures, to declare himself infallible, as he did, his head turned by his success in defence of the Pre-Raphaelites and booming of Turner. As to his discoveries, Turner was a full R.A. and Carpaccio had been accepted for centuries before he "discovered" them. Ruskin did but popularise Carpaccio, and buy and sell Turner. So good a friend of Ruskin's as W. M. Rossetti said that he was "sub-

stantially wrong in the Whistler matter," that his mind broke down at times, and that his mental troubles began in 1860. His conceit and his vanity can be explained in no other way. Unfortunately he lived in the only country where his arrogant pretensions would then have been countenanced, though, owing to the present acceptance of England and everything English, he has become something of a fetish abroad, now that he is exposed and discredited at home. He was rich, he was a University man, he contributed long letters to the *Times*. He was a typical new British patron of the arts, for to him the financial side of connoisseurship was of the greatest importance—"two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint." Moreover, he was a master of English; therefore he could commit any absurdity. As Whistler said, political economists considered him a great art critic, and artists looked upon him as a great political economist. Sometimes we have wondered if there was not another reason for Ruskin's venom. He never appreciated the great artists of the world, save certain Italians recognised long before. His estimates of Velasquez and Rembrandt, and his comparison between Turner and Constable, prove how little his now unheeded sermons were ever worth. While he failed to comprehend Charles Keene, he went into ecstasies over Kate Greenaway. He loved Stacy Marks and hated Snyders. Whistler, knowing this, may have laughed. Mr. Collingwood wrote that, long before the trial, Whistler "had made overtures to the great critic through Mr. Swinburne, the poet; but he had not been taken seriously." It is certain Ruskin was not taken seriously by the great artist. Swinburne suggested a meeting in a letter of August 11, 1865, to which we have referred (published in the *Library Edition of the Works of John Ruskin*), but in such words that we gather there must have been some sort of misunderstanding already between Whistler and Ruskin. Swinburne wanted to take Ruskin to the studio and represented Whistler as desirous of meeting him. It is likely that Whistler, knowing Ruskin's power in the Press, was willing to be written about by him, and also that Ruskin cherished whatever reason for dislike he had for Whistler.

Anderson Rose prepared the case, and we know the pains and trouble Whistler took over it. Judge Parry has shown us letters to his father which prove this. Whistler warned Rose there was no use in making him out a popular painter; better show the jury that the Academy

and Academicians were against him. He thought, at first, that the artists would be on his side and would unite with him to drive the false prophet out of the temple. But Ruskin the critic was to them more powerful than Whistler the painter, and when the time came they sneaked away, all except Albert Moore. Besides, there was the hope that the Yankee would lose. Whistler told us "they hoped they could drive me out of the country, or kill me! And if I hadn't had the constitution of a Government mule, they would!"

Charles Keene, whom Whistler considered the greatest English artist since Hogarth, could write on November 24, 1878:

"Whistler's case against Ruskin comes off, I believe, on Monday. He wants to subpœna me as a witness as to whether he is (as Ruskin says) an impostor or not. I told him I should be glad to record my opinion, but begged him to do without me if he could. They say it will most likely be settled on the point of law without going into evidence, but if the evidence is adduced, it will be the greatest lark that has been known for a long time in the courts."

Keene did not dare to stand up for Whistler and for art, and the bitterness is in those last words—"a lark!"

In the Exchequer Division at Westminster the action for libel, in which "Mr. James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *an* artist, seeks to recover damages against Mr. John Ruskin, *the* well-known author and art critic," came up before Baron Huddleston and a special jury. Our account is compiled chiefly from the reports published in the *Times* and the *Daily News*, November 26 and 27, 1878, from *The Gentle Art*, and from what Whistler, Mr. Rossetti, Armstrong, Mr. Graves, and others who were present have told us. According to Lady Burne-Jones, Ruskin had been delighted at the prospect of the trial:

"It's nuts and nectar to me, the notion of having to answer for myself in court, and the whole thing will enable me to assert some principles of art economy which I've never got into the public's head by writing: but may get sent over all the world vividly in a newspaper report or two. Meanwhile *I've* heard nothing of the matter yet, and am only afraid the fellow will be better advised."

Nuts and nectar turned to gall and vinegar. In the early winter of 1878 rumours of his ill-health reached the papers. Lady Burne-

Jones adds that, when the action was brought, "although he had quite recovered from his illness, he was not allowed to appear"—a curious sort of recovery. But he was well enough on the morning of the 26th to write to Charles Eliot Norton that "to-day I believe the comic Whistler lawsuit is to be decided."

The court was crowded. Mr. Serjeant Parry and Mr. Petheram were counsel for the plaintiff, and the Attorney-General (Sir John Holker) and Mr. Bowen for the defendant. Mr. Serjeant Parry opened the case for Whistler, "who has followed the profession of an artist for many years, while Mr. Ruskin is a gentleman well known to all of us, and holding perhaps the highest position in Europe or America as an art critic. Some of his works are destined to immortality, and it is the more surprising, therefore, that a gentleman holding such a position could traduce another in a way that would lead that other to come into a court of law to ask for damages. The jury, after hearing the case, will come to the conclusion that a great injustice has been done. Mr. Whistler, in the United States, has earned a reputation as a painter and an artist. He is not merely a painter, but has likewise distinguished himself in the capacity of etcher, achieving considerable honours in that department of art. He has been an unwearied worker in his profession, always desiring to succeed, and if he had formed an erroneous opinion, he should not have been treated with contempt and ridicule. Mr. Ruskin edits a publication called *Fors Clavigera*, that has a large circulation among artists and art patrons. In the July number of 1877 appeared a criticism of the pictures in the Grosvenor, containing the paragraph which is the defamatory matter complained of. Sir Coutts Lindsay is described as an amateur, both in art and shopkeeping, who must take up one business or the other. Mannerisms and errors are pointed out in the work of Burne-Jones, but whatever their extent, his pictures 'are never affected or indolent. The work is natural to the painter, however strange to us, wrought with the utmost conscience and care, however far, to his or our desire the result may seem to be incomplete. Scarcely so much can be said for any other pictures of the modern schools. Their eccentricities are almost always in some degree forced, and their imperfections gratuitously, if not impertinently, indulged. For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser Sir Coutts

Lindsay ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approaches the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen and heard much of cockney impudence before now, but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.' Mr. Ruskin pleaded that the alleged libel was privileged as being a fair and *bona fide* criticism upon a painting which the plaintiff had exposed to public view. But the terms in which Mr. Ruskin has spoken of the plaintiff are unfair and ungentlemanly, and are calculated to do, and have done him, considerable injury, and it will be for the jury to say what damages the plaintiff is entitled to."

Whistler was the first witness. He said: "I studied in Paris with Du Maurier, Poynter, Armstrong. I was awarded a gold medal at The Hague. . . . My etchings are in the British Museum and Windsor Castle collections. I exhibited eight pictures at the Grosvenor Gallery in the summer of 1877. No pictures were exhibited there save on invitation. I was invited by Sir Coutts Lindsay to exhibit. The first was a *Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket.* The second, a *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* [since called *Blue and Gold—Old Battersea Bridge*]. The third, a *Nocturne in Blue and Gold*, belonging to the Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham. The fourth, a *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*, belonging to Mrs. Leyland. The fifth, an *Arrangement in Black—Irving as Philip II. of Spain.* The sixth a *Harmony in Amber and Black.* The seventh, an *Arrangement in Brown.* In addition to these, there was a portrait of Mr. Carlyle. That portrait was painted from sittings Mr. Carlyle gave me. It has since been engraved, and the artist's proofs were all subscribed for. The Nocturnes, all but two, were sold before they went to the Grosvenor Gallery. One of them was sold to the Hon. Percy Wyndham for two hundred guineas—the one in *Blue and Gold.* One I sent to Mr. Graham in lieu of a former commission, the amount of which was a hundred and fifty guineas. A third one, *Blue and Silver*, I presented to Mrs. Leyland. The one that was for sale was in *Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket.*"

Curiously, the only one for sale was pounced on by Ruskin. The coxcomb was trying to get two hundred guineas, and the British commercial critic spotted it.

Asked whether, since the publication of the criticism, he had sold a Nocturne, Whistler answered: "Not by any means at the same price as before."

The portraits of Irving and Carlyle were produced in court, and he is said to have described the *Irving* as "a large impression—a sketch; it was not intended as a finished picture." We do not believe he said anything of the sort.

He was then asked for his definition of a Nocturne: "I have perhaps, meant rather to indicate an artistic interest alone in the work, divesting the picture from any outside sort of interest which might have been otherwise attached to it. It is an arrangement of line, form, and colour first, and I make use of any incident of it which shall bring about a symmetrical result. Among my works are some night pieces; and I have chosen the word Nocturne because it generalises and simplifies the whole set of them."

The Falling Rocket, though it is difficult here to follow the case, was evidently produced at this point upside down; Whistler describing it as a night piece, said it represented the fireworks at Cremorne.

Attorney-General: "Not a view of Cremorne?"

Whistler: "If it were called a view of Cremorne, it would certainly bring about nothing but disappointment on the part of the beholders. (Laughter.) It is an artistic arrangement."

Attorney-General: "Why do you call Mr. Irving an *Arrangement in Black?*" (Laughter.)

The judge interposed, though in jest, for there was more laughter, and explained that the picture, not Mr. Irving, was the *Arrangement.*

Whistler: "All these works are impressions of my own. I make them my study. I suppose them to appeal to none but those who may understand the technical matter."

And he added that it would be possible to see the pictures in Westminster Palace Hotel close by, where he had placed them for the purpose.

Attorney-General: "I suppose you are willing to admit that your pictures exhibit some eccentricities. You have been told that over and over again?"

Whistler: "Yes, very often." (Laughter.)

Attorney-General: "You send them to the gallery to invite the admiration of the public?"

Whistler: "That would be such vast absurdity on my part that I don't think I could." (Laughter.)

Attorney-General: "Can you tell me how long it took you to knock off that Nocturne?"

Whistler: "I beg your pardon?" (Laughter.)

Attorney-General: "I am afraid that I am using a term that applies rather perhaps to my own work. . . ."

Whistler: . . . "Let us say then, how long did I take to 'knock off'—I think that is it—to knock off that Nocturne; well, as well as I remember, about a day. . . . I may have still put a few more touches to it the next day if the painting were not dry. I had better say, then, that I was two days at work on it."

Attorney-General: "The labour of two days, then, is that for which you ask two hundred guineas?"

Whistler: "No; I ask it for the knowledge of a lifetime."

Attorney-General: "You don't approve of criticism?"

Whistler: "I should not disapprove in any way of technical criticism by a man whose life is passed in the practice of the science which he criticises; but for the opinion of a man whose life is not so passed, I would have as little regard as you would if he expressed an opinion on law."

Attorney-General: "You expect to be criticised?"

Whistler: "Yes, certainly; and I do not expect to be affected by it until it comes to be a case of this kind."

The Nocturne, the *Blue and Silver*, was then produced.

Whistler: "It represents Battersea Bridge by moonlight."

The Judge: "Is this part of the picture at the top Old Battersea Bridge? Are those figures on the top of the bridge intended for people?"

Whistler: "They are just what you like."

The Judge: "That is a barge beneath?"

Whistler: "Yes, I am very much flattered at your seeing that. The picture is simply a representation of moonlight. My whole scheme was only to bring about a certain harmony of colour."

The Judge: "How long did it take you to paint that picture?"

PORTRAIT OF MRS. F. R. LEYLAND
SYMPHONY IN FLESH-COLOUR AND PINK
OIL
In the possession of H. C. Frick, Esq.

(*See page 125*)

PORTRAIT OF MISS LEYLAND

PASTEL

In the possession of the Executors of Mrs. F. R. Leyland

(*See page* 124)

Whistler: "I completed the work in one day, after having arranged the idea in my mind."*

"The court adjourned, and the jury went to see the pictures at the Westminster Palace Hotel. When, on their return, the *Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket*, was produced, the Attorney-General asked:

"How long did it take you to paint that?"

Whistler: "One whole day and part of another."

Attorney-General: "What is the peculiar beauty of that picture?"

Whistler: "It would be impossible for me to explain to you, I am afraid, although I dare say I could to a sympathetic ear."

Attorney-General: "Do you not think that anybody looking at the picture might fairly come to the conclusion that it had no particular beauty?"

Whistler: "I have strong evidence that Mr. Ruskin did come to that conclusion."

Attorney-General: "Do you think it fair that Mr. Ruskin should come to that conclusion?"

Whistler: "What might be fair to Mr. Ruskin, I cannot answer. No artist of culture would come to that conclusion.

Attorney-General: "Do you offer that picture to the public as one of particular beauty, fairly worth two hundred guineas?"

Whistler: "I offer it as a work that I have conscientiously executed and that I think worth the money. I would hold my reputation upon this, as I would upon any of my other works."

Mr. W. M. Rossetti was the next witness. He was Ruskin's friend as well as Whistler's, and the position was not pleasant. But, he has written us, he was "compelled to act, willy-nilly, in opposition to Ruskin's interest in the action."

Rossetti: "I consider the *Blue and Silver* an artistic and beautiful

* This picture then belonged to Mr. Graham, and some years after at his sale at Christie's was received with hisses. It was purchased by Mr. Robert H. C. Harrison for sixty pounds, and at the close of the London Whistler Memorial Exhibition was sold for two thousand guineas to the National Arts Collection Fund, by whom it was presented to the nation. It now hangs in the National Gallery. See Chapter XXIX.

representation of a pale but bright moonlight. I admire Mr. Whistler's pictures, but not without exception. I appreciate the meaning of the titles. *The Falling Rocket* is not one of the pictures I admire."

Attorney-General: "Is it a gem?" (Laughter.)

Rossetti: "No."

Attorney-General: "Is it an exquisite painting?"

Rossetti: "No."

Attorney-General: "Is it very beautiful?"

Rossetti: "No."

Attorney-General: "Is it a work of art?"

Rossetti: "Yes, it is."

Attorney-General: "Is it worth two hundred guineas?"

Rossetti: "Yes."

Albert Moore said that Whistler's pictures were beautiful, and that no other painter could have succeeded in doing them. The *Black and Gold* he looked upon as simply marvellous, the most consummate art. Asked if there was eccentricity in the picture, he said he should call it originality.

W. G. Wills testified to the knowledge shown in the pictures; they were the works of a man of genius.

Mr. Algernon Graves was in court to give evidence to the popularity of the *Carlyle*. As the picture was not catalogued when exhibited at the Grosvenor, Baron Huddleston ruled that there was no proof of its having been exhibited in 1877, and he was not called. These were the only witnesses for Whistler, though we have seen a letter he wrote to Anderson Rose suggesting Haweis, who had preached "a poem of praise" about The Peacock Room, and Prince Teck, who might be asked to swear that he "thought it a great piece of art." We have also seen the draft of a letter to Tissot upon whose aid he relied.

The Attorney-General submitted there was no case. But Baron Huddleston could not deny that the criticism held Whistler's work up to ridicule and contempt; that so far it was libellous, and must, therefore, go to the jury. It was for the Attorney-General to prove it fair and honest criticism.

The Attorney-General's address to the jury began with praise of Ruskin, it went on with ridicule of the testimony for the plaintiff, it finished with contempt for Whistler and his work.

"The Nocturnes were not worthy the name of great works of art. He had that morning looked into the dictionary for the meaning of coxcomb, and found that the word carried the old idea of the licensed jester who had a cap on his head with a cock's comb in it. If that were the true definition, Mr. Whistler should not complain, because his pictures were capital jests which had afforded much amusement to the public. He said, without fear of contradiction, that if Mr. Whistler founded his reputation on the pictures he had shown in the Grosvenor Gallery, the *Nocturne in Black and Gold*, the *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*, his *Arrangement of Irving in Black*, his representation of the *Ladies in Brown*, and his *Symphonies in Grey and Yellow*, he was a mere pretender to the art of painting."

In Ruskin's absence, Burne-Jones was the first witness called for the defence. Lady Burne-Jones says, in her *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, that on November 2, Ruskin had written to him:

"I gave your name to the blessed lawyer, as chief of men to whom they might refer for anything which, in their wisdom, they can't discern unaided concerning me."

She adds that for her husband: "Few positions could have been more annoying or difficult for the paragraph containing the sentence in question—one of Ruskin's severest condemnations—was practically a comparison between Mr. Whistler's work and Edward's own. But the subject covered so much wider ground than any personality that Edward was finally able to put this thought aside, and did with calmness what he had undertaken to do, namely—endorse Ruskin's criticism that good workmanship was essential to a good picture."

Walter Crane stated in his *Reminiscences* that he met Burne-Jones at dinner at Leyland's not long before the trial; and that then Burne-Jones would not see Whistler's merit as an artist. "He seemed to think there was only one *right* way of painting. . . . Under the circumstances he could hardly afford to allow any credit to Whistler."

In court Burne-Jones temporised. He admitted Whistler's art, but regretted the want of finish in Whistler's pictures; so strengthening the impression of the laziness, levity, or looseness of Whistler. In his "deliberate judgment" Mrs. Leyland's *Blue and Silver* was a work of art, but a very incomplete one. "It did not show the finish of a complete work of art," yet "it is masterly. Neither in

composition, detail, nor form has the picture any quality whatever, but in colour it has a very fine quality. . . . *Blue and Silver—Old Battersea Bridge*, in colour is even better than the other. It is more formless, it is bewildering in form. As to composition and detail, there is none whatever. It has no finish. I do not think Mr. Whistler intended it to be regarded as a finished picture."

Mr. Bowen: "Now, take the *Nocturne in Black and Gold—The Falling Rocket*, is that, in your opinion, a work of art?"

Burne-Jones: "No, I cannot say that it is. It is only one of a thousand failures that artists have made in their efforts to paint night."

Mr. Bowen: "Is that picture in your judgment worth two hundred guineas?"

Burne-Jones: "No, I cannot say it is, seeing how much careful work men do for much less. Mr. Whistler gave infinite promise at first, but I do not think he has fulfilled it. I think he has evaded the great difficulty of painting, and has not tested his powers by carrying it out. The difficulties in painting increase daily as the work progresses, and that is the reason why so many of us fail. We are none of us perfect. The danger is this, that if unfinished pictures become common, we shall arrive at a stage of mere manufacture and the art of the country will be degraded."

Mr. Frith, R.A., was next called. Truly, Ruskin found himself with strange supporters. Frith was chosen, we have been told, because Ruskin wanted some one who could not be thought biased in his favour.

Mr. Bowen: "Are the pictures works of art?"

Frith: "I should say not."

Mr. Bowen: "Is the *Nocturne in Blue and Gold* a serious work of art?"

Frith: "Not to me. It is not worth, in my opinion, two hundred guineas. *Old Battersea Bridge* does not convey the impression of moonlight to me in the slightest degree. The colour does not represent any more than you could get from a bit of wallpaper or silk."

In cross-examination he contradicted himself, and said that he thought Mr. Whistler had "very great power as an artist."

Ruskin's final supporter was Tom Taylor, critic of the *Times*. No, he said, the *Nocturne in Black and Gold* was not a good picture,

and, to prove it, he read his own criticism in the *Times*, and his assertion there that the Nocturnes were worth doing because they were the only things that Whistler could do.

A portrait by Titian was then shown, in order to explain Burne-Jones' idea of finish, and the jury, mistaking it for a Whistler, would have none of it.

Mr. Bowen, in summing up the case, said that all that Ruskin had done was to express an opinion on Whistler's pictures—an opinion to which he adhered. This was about all he could say except, in conclusion, to appeal to the jury. There was no defence. Mr. Serjeant Parry, in his reply, pointed out that they had not dared to ask if Whistler deserved to be stigmatised as a wilful impostor, and that even if Ruskin had not been well enough to attend the court "he might have been examined before a commission. His decree has gone forth that Whistler's pictures were worthless. He has not supported that by evidence. He has not condescended to give reasons for the view he has taken, he has treated us with contempt, as he treated Whistler. He has said: 'I, Mr. Ruskin, seated on my throne of art, say what I please and expect all the world to agree with me.' Mr. Ruskin is a great writer, but not as a man; as a man he has degraded himself. His tone in writing the article is personal and malicious. Mr. Ruskin's criticism of Mr. Whistler's pictures is almost exclusively in the nature of a personal attack, a pretended criticism of art which is really a criticism upon the man himself, and calculated to injure him. It was written recklessly, and for the purpose of holding him up to ridicule and contempt. Mr. Ruskin has gone out of his way to attack Mr. Whistler personally, and must answer for the consequences of having written a damnatory attack upon the painter. This is what is called pungent criticism, stinging criticism, but it is defamatory, and I hope the jury will mark their disapproval by their verdict."

The Judge pointed out that "there are certain words by Mr. Ruskin, about which I should think no one would entertain a doubt: those words amount to a libel. The critic should confine himself to criticism and not make it a veil for personal censure or for showing his power. The question for the jury is, did Mr. Whistler's ideas of art justify the language used by Mr. Ruskin? And the further question is whether

the insult offered—if insult there has been—is of such a gross character as to call for substantial damages? Whether it is a case for merely contemptuous damages to the extent of a farthing, or something of that sort, indicating that it is one which ought never to have been brought into court, and in which no pecuniary damage has been sustained; or whether the case is one which calls for damages in some small sum as indicating the opinion of the jury that the offender has gone beyond the strict letter of the law."

After an hour's deliberation, the jury gave their verdict for the plaintiff—damages one farthing. The Judge emphasised his contempt by giving judgment for Whistler without costs; that is, both sides had to pay.

It is said that Whistler wore the farthing on his watch-chain. We never saw it, we never knew him to wear a watch-chain. But he made a drawing of the farthing for *The Gentle Art.*

"The whole thing was a hateful affair," Burne-Jones wrote to Rossetti, and many agreed with him, though for other reasons. The *Times*, the *Spectator*, and the *Portfolio* pronounced the verdict satisfactory to neither party, virtually a censure upon both. Mr. Graves, who watched the trial without the responsibility he was disposed to meet, says:

"I have always felt that, had the plaintiff's counsel impressed upon the jury that Mr. Ruskin had mentioned the price asked for the picture, a matter that has always been outside the critic's province, as well as criticising them as works of art, the result to Mr. Whistler would have been more in his favour. Mr. Tom Taylor was never asked whether he had ever criticised the price as well as the quality."

Armstrong has told us of the suppression of important letters: "A little while before the trial I met Whistler one evening at the Arts Club, and he told me of his hopes of a favourable result. My sympathies were entirely on his side. He assured me that he had evidence, which I believe could not fail to be effective, in the shape of letters from Leighton, P.R.A.; Burton, Director of the National Gallery; and Poynter, R.A., then Director for Art at S.K., speaking highly of the moonlight pictures. These letters seemed to me most important, for they were from people in official positions, whose good words would have weighed with the British jurymen. Nothing was

said about these letters in the newspaper reports, and I asked Jimmie the reason for this omission of the strongest evidence on his side. He told me that the writers of the letters had objected to their being put in, and so he had refrained from using them, and without the personal testimony of the writers they would not have been accepted as evidence in court. After the trial I saw Holker and asked him if he had been helping to smirch any more poor artists. He replied that he was bound to do the best he could for his client. I told him he would never have allowed the exhibition of the pictures in court if he had been Whistler's counsel, and he asked: 'Why didn't Jimmie have me?' I explained that I had recommended his being retained, but it was objected that his fee would be too heavy, and he said, 'I'd have done it for nothing for Jimmie.' I was very sorry that Mr. Ruskin was not punished."

Arthur Severn wrote us that, at the Ruskin trial, he "was on the opposite side, although my sympathies were rather with Whistler, whose *Nocturne in Black and Gold* I knew to be carefully painted. Whenever we met he was most courteous, understanding my position. During the trial one of the Nocturnes was handed across the court over the people's heads, so that Whistler might verify it as his work. On its way, an old gentleman with a bald head got a tap from the frame, then the picture showed signs of falling out of its frame, and when Serjeant Parry turned to Whistler and said 'Is that your work, Mr. Whistler?' the artist, putting his eyeglass up and with his slight American twang, said, 'Well, it was, but if it goes on much longer in that way, I don't think it will be.' And when Ruskin's Titian was shown, 'Oh, come, we've had enough of those Whistlers,' said a juryman. I thought Whistler looked anxious whilst the jury was away. Another trial came on so as not to waste time. The court was dark, and candles had to be brought in—it seemed to be about some rope, and huge coils were on the solicitors' table. A stupid clerk was being examined. Nothing intelligent could be got out of him, and at last Mr. Day, one of the counsel (afterwards the judge), said, 'Give him the rope's end,' which produced great laughter in court, in which Whistler heartily joined. Then, suddenly, a hush fell; the jury returned a verdict for Whistler, damages one farthing."

There was a report of an application for a new trial. A desire

was expressed that friends of artist and critic might adjust the dispute. But Whistler made no application, called for no arbitration. He accepted his farthing damages. The British public rallied to their prophet, and got up a subscription for the rich man. It was managed by the Fine Art Society. The account was opened at the Union Bank of London in the names of Burne-Jones, F. S. Ellis, and Mr. Marcus B. Huish, and by December 10 a subscription list was published, amounting already to one hundred and fifty-one pounds, five shillings and sixpence, headed by Burne-Jones, five guineas. The costs were estimated at three hundred and eighty-five pounds, and Mr. E. T. Cook says that eventually they were paid by his friends.

According to W. M. Rossetti, " Whistler wrote to Anderson Rose, saying it would be at least equally appropriate for a band of subscribers to pay his costs; and, he added, ' And in the event of a subscription I would willingly contribute my own mite.' "

Mr. J. P. Heseltine started a fund for Whistler, and a list was opened at the office of *L'Art*, 134 New Bond Street. But nothing came of it, except that Whistler sent one of his pastels to Mr. Heseltine. For Whistler, the poor man, the costs were not paid, and he went through the bankruptcy court.

Letters flowed into the papers. There were interviews. Witticisms went the rounds. Whistler is reported to have said, " Well, you know, I don't go so far as to Burne-Jones, but really somebody ought to burn Jones' pictures! " A few journalists did not forget that Whistler was an artist, a few people were sympathetic, a few congratulations were received at the White House. If Whistler was disappointed he kept it to himself. He would have liked better to get his costs and damages, he said. But the verdict was a moral triumph. He had gone into court not for damages but to vindicate his position, and, therefore, that of artists.

Whistler explained this position in *Whistler* v. *Ruskin—Art and Art Critics* (December 1878), the first of his series of pamphlets in brown-paper covers. It was printed by Spottiswoode, though his idea was to have it lithographed by Way, and published by Chatto and Windus. He dedicated it to Albert Moore. It is a protest against the folly of the Pen in venturing to criticise the Brush. Literature is left to the literary man, science to the scientist, why then

PORTRAIT OF MRS. LOUIS HUTH
ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK. NO. II
OIL
In the possession of the Executors of the Family

(*See page* 126)

FANNY LEYLAND

STUDY FOR THE ETCHING. G. 108

PENCIL SKETCH

Formerly in the possession of J. H. Wren, Esq.

(*See page* 124)

should art be at the mercy of " the one who was never in it," but whose boast it is that he is doing good to art. The critics " are all ' doing good '—yes, they all do good to Art. Poor Art! what a sad state the slut is in, an these gentlemen shall help her." Ruskin resigned the Slade Professorship. He wrote to Dean Liddell from Brantwood (November 28, 1878) that the result of the Whistler trial left him no option. " I cannot hold a chair from which I have no power of expressing judgment without being taxed for it by British Law." Unless he continued to be the Pope and the Prophet he believed himself, he could not go on. He could not stand criticism, and he collapsed when his criticism was questioned. The trial, he wrote, made his professorship a farce. Whistler suggested that Ruskin might fill a Chair of Ethics instead. " *Il faut vivre*," was the cry of the art critic, but Whistler said, " *Je n'en vois pas la nécessité*."

Whistler won. The trial was a triumph. But he had to pay heavily for his victory.

CHAPTER XX : BANKRUPTCY. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-EIGHT AND EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-NINE.

Whistler's financial affairs were in hopeless confusion. The builder's estimate for the White House was largely exceeded, the cost of the trial had to be paid for, the *atelier* waited for pupils, and the debts brought from Lindsey Row were many. He wrote to his mother at Hastings of his economies and his hopes to pay his debts, but he did not know the meaning of economy. There is a legend of a grocer who had let a bill for tomatoes and fruit run up to six hundred pounds, and when, after the trial, he insisted on settlement, Whistler said :

" How—what—why—why, of course, you have sent these things—most excellent things—and they have been eaten, you know, by most excellent people. Think what a splendid advertisement. And sometimes, you know, the tomatoes are not quite up to the mark, the fruit, you know, not quite fresh. And if you go into these unseemly discussions about the bill—well, you know, I shall have to go into discussions about all this—and think how it would hurt your reputation with all these extraordinary people. I think the best thing is not to

refer to the past—I'll let it go, and in the future we'll have a weekly account—wiser, you know."

The grocer left without his money, but was offered in payment two Nocturnes, one the upright Valparaiso. Another story of the same grocer is that he arrived with his account as a grand piano was being carried in. Whistler said he was so busy he couldn't attend to the matter just then, and the grocer thought if grand pianos were being bought, it must be all right. To a dealer in rugs Whistler would have given three Nocturnes in payment, but the dealer refused and spent the rest of his life regretting it.

It was nothing unusual for bailiffs to be in possession, or for bills to cover the walls. The first time this happened, Whistler said to the people whom he invited to dine that they might know his house by the bills on it. When someone complained that creditors kept him walking up and down all night, Whistler was amused:

"Dear me! Do as I do! Leave the walking up and down to the creditors!"

Of the bailiffs he made a new feature at his breakfasts. Mrs. Lynedoch Moncrieff has told us of a Sunday when two or three men waited with Whistler's servant, John, and she said to Whistler:

"I am glad to see you've grown so wealthy."

"Ha, ha! Bailiffs! You know, I had to put them to some use!"

Mr. Rossetti and his wife once found the same "liveried attendants."

"'Your servants seem to be extremely attentive, Mr. Whistler, and anxious to please you,' one of the guests said. 'Oh yes,' was his answer, 'I assure you they wouldn't leave me.'"

Others remember a Sunday when the furniture was numbered for a sale. When breakfast was announced by a bailiff, Whistler said: "They are wonderful fellows. You will see how excellently they wait at table, and to-morrow, you know, if you want, you can see them sell the chairs you sit on every bit as well. Amazing."

Mrs. Edwin Edwards wrote us that when three men were in possession, he treated them while his friends carted away his pictures out of the back door. Others say that the bailiffs, multiplied to seven, were invited into the garden, and given beer with a little something in it. No sooner had they tasted than down went their heads on the table round which they sat. People dining with Whistler that evening

were taken into the garden to see the seven sleepers of Ephesus : " Stick pins in them, shout in their ears—see—you can't wake them ! " All evening it rained and it rained, and it thundered, and it lightened, and it hailed. All night they slept. Morning came and they slept. But at the hour when he had given them their glass the day before, they all woke up and asked for more.

One of the bailiffs at the end of a week, demanded his money. Whistler said :

" If I could afford to keep you I would do without you."

" But what is to become of my wife and family if I don't get my wages, sir ? "

" Ha ha ! You must ask those who sent you here to answer that question."

" Really, Mr. Whistler, sir, I need the money."

" Oh ho ! Have a man in yourself."

Whistler said " it was kind of them to see to such tedious affairs." One he asked : " And how long will you be ' the man in possession ' ? "

" That, Mr. Whistler, sir, depends on your paying Mr. ——'s bill."

" Awkward for me, but perhaps more for you ! I hope you won't mind it, though, you know, I fear your stay with me will be a lengthy one. However, you will find it not entirely unprofitable, for you will see and hear much that may be useful to you."

When things got more desperate, bills covered the front of the house, announcing the sale. Whistler, begging the bailiffs to be at home, went one night to dine. It was stormy, and, returning late, he found that the rain had washed the bills loose and they were flapping in the wind. He woke up the bailiffs, made them get a ladder, and paste every bill down again. He had allowed them to cover his house with their posters, but, so long as he lived in it, no man should sleep with it in a slovenly condition.

Early in May 1879, Whistler was declared bankrupt. His liabilities were four thousand six hundred and forty-one pounds, nine shillings and three pence, and his assets, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-four pounds, nine shillings and four pence. In his long overcoat, longer than ever, swinging his cane lengthening in defiance, his hat set jauntily on his curls, he appeared in the City :

" Ha ha ! Well, you know, here I am in the City ! Amazing !

You know, on the way, I dropped in to see George Lewis, being in the neighbourhood, and, you know, ha ha, he gave me a paper for you to sign ! "

It was a petition in bankruptcy.

The creditors met at the Inns of Court Hotel in June. Sir Thomas Sutherland was in the chair, and Leyland, the chief creditor, and various Chelsea tradesmen attended. The only novelty in the proceedings was a speech by Whistler on plutocrats, men with millions, and what he thought of them, and it was with difficulty he was called to order. A committee of examiners was appointed, composed of Leyland, Howell, and Thomas Way.

Leyland was not let off by Whistler. As Michael Angelo, painting the walls of the Sistine Chapel, plunged the critic who had offended him into hell, so Whistler immortalised the man by whom he thought himself wronged. He painted three pictures. The first was *The Loves of the Lobsters—an Arrangement in Rats*, the most prominent lobster in the shirt-frills of Leyland. " Whom the gods wish to make ridiculous, they furnish with a frill ! " he said, and the saying was repeated until it reached Leyland, as he meant it should. The second was *Mount Ararat*, Noah's Ark on a hill, with little figures all in frills. The third was the *Gold Scab—Eruption in Frilthy Lucre*, a creature, breaking out in scabs of golden sovereigns, wearing the frill, seated on the White House playing the piano. The hideousness of the figure is more appalling because of the colour, the design. A malicious joke begun in anger, Mr. Arthur Symons has described it, from which " beauty exudes like the scent of a poisonous flower." Years after, when it was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery, one of the serious new critics regretted that Whistler allowed himself to be influenced by Beardsley. These caricatures alone were in the studio when Leyland and the committee made the inventory. Augustus Hare wrote (May 13, 1879) of a visit in the meantime :

" This morning I went with a very large party to Whistler's studio. We were invited to see the pictures, but there was only one there, *The Loves of the Lobsters*. It was supposed to represent Niagara, and looked as if the artist had upset the inkstand, and left Providence to work out its own results. In the midst of the black chaos were two lobsters curveting opposite each other, and looking as if they were done

with red sealing-wax. 'I wonder you did not paint the lobsters making love before they were boiled,' aptly observed a lady visitor. 'Oh, I never thought of that,' said Whistler. It was a joke, I suppose. The little man, with his plume of white hair ('the Whistler tuft' he calls it) waving on his forehead, frisked about the room, looking most strange and uncanny, and rather diverted himself over our disappointment in coming so far and finding nothing to see. People admire like sheep his pictures in the Grosvenor Gallery, following each other's lead because it is the fashion."

Worried as he was, Whistler sent to the Grosvenor of 1879 the *Portrait of Miss Rosa Corder*, *Portrait of Miss Connie Gilchrist*, *The Pacific*, *Nocturne in Blue and Gold*, six etchings, two studies in chalk, and three pastels. His etching, *Old Putney Bridge*, was at the Royal Academy. The critics talked the usual nonsense, and have since repented it. Mr. (now Sir) Frederick Wedmore distinguished himself by an article: *Mr. Whistler's Theories and Mr. Whistler's Art*, in the *Nineteenth Century* (August 1879), and afterwards reprinted in *Four Masters of Etching* (1883). He could appreciate Whistler's work as little as he could understand *Art and Art Critics*, and from its wit was—and is—still smarting. Whistler he placed as:

"Long ago an artist of high promise. Now he is an artist often of agreeable, though sometimes of incomplete and seemingly wayward performance. . . . That only the artist should write on art by continued reiteration may convince the middle-class public that has little of the instinct of art. But, sirs, not so easily can you dispense with the services of Diderot and Ruskin."

Wedmore had apparently never heard of Cennini and Dürer, Vasari and Cellini, Da Vinci and Reynolds and Fromentin, who remain, while Diderot and Ruskin and Wedmore himself are discredited or forgotten. He regretted that Whistler's "painted work is somewhat apt to be dependent on the innocent error that confuses the beginning with the end." He condemned the *Portrait of Henry Irving* as a "murky caricature of Velasquez," the *Carlyle* as "a doleful canvas." The Nocturnes were "encouraging sketches," with "an effect of harmonious decoration, so that a dozen or so of them on the upper panels of a lofty chamber would afford even to the wallpapers

of William Morris a welcome and justifiable alternative. . . . They suffer cruelly when placed against work not, of course, of petty and mechanical finish, but of patient achievement. But they have a merit of their own, and I do not wish to understate it."

Whistler had "never mastered the subtleties of accurate form"; "the interest of life—the interest of humanity" had little occupied him, *but* Wedmore hoped that the career, begun with promise, "might not close in work too obstinately faithful to eccentric error." By his etchings his name might "aspire to live," though, "for his fame, Mr. Whistler has etched too much, or at least has published too much," though there is "commonness and vulgarity" in the figures in many prints, though he "lacked the art, the patience, or the will to continue" others.

"The future will forget his disastrous failures, to which in the present has somehow been accorded, through the activity of friendship, or the activity of enmity, a publicity rarely bestowed upon failures at all."

In the same month and year, August 1879, an American, Mr. W. C. Brownell, published in *Scribner's Monthly* an article on *Whistler in Painting and Etching*. He treated Whistler and his work with a seriousness in "significant" contrast to Wedmore's clumsy flippancy. This was the first intelligent American article in Whistler's support, and it was illustrated by wood-engravings of his paintings and prints. Amidst the torrent of abuse, it came when Whistler most needed it. But it was not taken seriously, and much was made of Mr. Brownell's slip in describing the dry-point *Jo* as a portrait of Whistler's brother.

Whistler, left homeless by his bankruptcy, revived the plan for the journey to Venice, and a series of etchings there. He suggested it to Ernest G. Brown, Messrs. Seeley's representative when the *Billingsgate* was published in the *Portfolio*, and now with the Fine Art Society who, at his persuasion, had brought out four of the London plates this year: *Free-Trade Wharf*, *Old Battersea Bridge*, *Old Putney Bridge*, and *The Little Putney*, *No. I.* They liked the new scheme so well that they gave Whistler a commission for twelve plates in Venice to be delivered in three months' time. One hundred proofs of each were to be printed, and he was to receive, we believe, twelve hundred pounds.

By September 7 (1879), Whistler apparently in great spirits, though

" everything was to be sold up," was " arranging his route to Venice " says Mr. Cole. From the receiver he had permission to destroy unfinished work. Copperplates were scratched and pictures smeared with glue, stripped off their stretchers and rolled up. Then he packed his trunk, wrote over his front door: " Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. E. W. Godwin, F.S.A., built this one," and started for Venice.

The White House was sold on September 18, 1879, to Mr. Harry Quilter, who paid for it two thousand seven hundred pounds in money at the time, and later in Whistler's jeers. The public laughed at the furniture and effects, " at which even a broker's man would turn up his nose. If ever the seamy side of a fashionable artist's existence was shown, it was during that auction in Chelsea. . . . Truly, if Ruskin had wished to have his revenge, he might have enjoyed it at the White House, when his prosecutor's specially built-to-order abode was characterised as a disgrace to the neighbourhood by Philistinic spectators, and its contents supplied material for the rude jokes of Hebrew brokers and the special correspondent of the *Echo*."

" Two wooden spoons, a rusty knife handle and two empty oil tins," was one of the lots. Rolls of canvases were carried off for a few shillings. Out of them came a *Valparaiso*, a *Cremorne Gardens*, the portrait of Sir Henry Cole, a *White Girl* and a *Blue Girl*, the portrait of Miss Florence Leyland, in such a condition that nothing now remains but the two blue pots of flowers on either side. The *Cremorne Gardens*, a few years after Whistler's death, was sold by T. R. Way for twelve hundred pounds to Mr. A. H. Hannay. Then an effort was made to sell it, through London dealers, for almost four times the price to the Melbourne Gallery, where there were no Whistlers and where, therefore, those who had Whistler's interests at heart thought it would not represent him worthily. Later on the painting was sold to the Metropolitan Museum, New York. It was first cleaned by T. R. Way, and when we saw it and had it photographed for the earlier edition of this book, it contained portraits of both Leyland and Whistler. It has since been cleaned again and the portraits have completely disappeared. Whether the Metropolitan is responsible for the vandalism we do not know. But we do know that it is this way history is wiped from the face of the earth by the restorer. Thomas Way, at the sale, bought

The Lobsters and *Mount Ararat.* Other pictures went astray or disappeared temporarily, for a few intelligent people were at the sale. Whistler wrote to Mrs. William Whistler from Venice begging her to trace and find them, which she was unable to do. But they are turning up now.

Whistler's china, prints, and a few pictures were reserved for a sale at Sotheby's, on Thursday, February 12, 1880. The title-page of the catalogue is: "*In Liquidation. By order of the Trustees of J. A. McN. Whistler. Catalogue of the Decorative Porcelain, Cabinets, Paintings and other Works of Art of J. A. McN. Whistler. Received from the White House, Fulham, comprising Numerous Pieces of Blue and White China; the Painting in Oil of* Connie Gilchrist, Dancing with a Skipping-Rope, *styled* A Girl in Gold, *by Whistler; A Satirical painting of a Gentleman, styled* The Creditor, *by Whistler. Crayon Drawings and Etchings, Cabinets, and Miscellaneous Articles.*" When Leyland learned that the *Gold Scab—The Creditor*, was in the sale he did his best to have it removed. Dealers and amateurs were there: Way, Oscar Wilde, Huish, The Fine Art Society, Dowdeswell, Lord Redesdale, Deschamps, Wickham Flower, and Howell were purchasers. Howell secured the Japanese screen, the background of the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine.* The Japanese bath fell to Mr. Jarvis. *The Creditor* was bought by Messrs. Dowdeswell for twelve guineas, vanished, turned up in the King's Road, Chelsea, years later, and was purchased by Mr. G. P. Jacomb-Hood for ten pounds, and is now in the collection of Mrs. Spreckles in San Francisco. It is one of the documents Mr. Freer should have—and could have had—as he should have the *Whistler* with the brushes, the *Mrs. Leyland*, the *Dr. Whistler*, and others which would add enormously to the historic value as well as artistic completeness of his collection. *Connie Gilchrist* was sold to Mr. Wilkinson for fifty guineas. Whistler's bust by Boehm was bought by Way for six guineas. A crayon sketch, catalogued as a portrait of Sarah Bernhardt, was knocked down for five guineas to Oscar Wilde, who asked her to sign it, which she did, writing that it was very like her. It might have been handed down as her portrait, had it not appeared at Oscar Wilde's sale, and found its way back to Whistler, who declared that Madame Bernhardt never sat to him. The sale at Sotheby's realised three hundred and twenty-eight pounds, nineteen shillings.

CHAPTER XXI : VENICE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-NINE AND EIGHTEEN EIGHTY.

For years Whistler wanted to go to Venice. When he got there he found it a difficult place to work in. It was cold, and he felt the cold. It is almost impossible to hold a copperplate or a needle with numbed fingers, and Venice in ice made him long for London in fog. He would gladly have exchanged the Square of St. Mark's for Piccadilly, a gondola for a hansom. Even Ruskin says this.

Affairs in London worried him. He wrote for news of the vanished pictures. He knew that his letters had got into second-hand bookshops —even letters to his mother. He was ill and the Doctor was far away.

Venice he thought beautiful, most beautiful after rain when, he wrote his mother, the colour and reflections were gorgeous. The Venetian masters interested him. At the Scuola di San Rocco he is remembered climbing up for a closer look at the Tintorettos. Veronese and Titian were great swells ; Canaletto and Guardi, great masters. He went to St. Mark's for Mass at Christmas, though he wrote that the ceiling of The Peacock Room was more splendid than the dome. But, as he told Fantin years before, it was a waste of time to search for new subjects, and all subjects were new to him in Venice. Countess Rucellai (Miss Edith Bronson) writes that " he used to say Venice was an impossible place to sit down and sketch, ' there was something still better round the corner.' "

Mr. Henry Woods says : " He wandered for motives, but no matter how much he wandered, and appeared to loaf, when he found a subject he worked with a determination that no cold and cheerlessness could daunt. I remember his energy—and suffering—when doing those beautiful pastels, nearly all done during the coldest winter I have known in Venice, and mostly towards evening when the cold was bitterest ! He soon found out the beautiful quality of colour there is here before sunset in winter. He had a strong constitution. He was only unwell once with a bad cold."

The Fine Art Society asked him to make twelve plates in three months. The plates were not started for weeks, and the Fine Art Society demanded what he was doing. The answer was at first silence

and then a request for more money. The Fine Art Society began to doubt and Whistler was furious. Then reports came that he was doing enormous plates they had not ordered. Howell and others said that Whistler would never come back, and Academicians laughed at the idea of the Society getting either plates or their money from such a "charlatan." With each new suggestion of doubt, Whistler's fury grew. "Amazing their letters and mine, but, perhaps, not for the public." The delay was his care. Even Frank Duveneck, most procrastinating of mortals, made his Venetian etchings, and Otto Bacher changed his style and did his Venetian plates, before Whistler found his subjects.

It amused him to tell the American Consul that idleness is the virtue of the artist, but it was a virtue he denied himself. It was "the same old story" he wrote his mother, "I am at my work the first thing at dawn and the last thing at night." He could not stand the Venetian crowd, and he worked as much as possible out of windows. He did little from gondola or sandolo. To the tourist, a gondola is a thing of joy; to the worker, it is a terrible, unstable studio, and even in the old days it cost a hundred francs a month, but then, the gondolier was your slave.

He mostly left the monuments of Venice, as of London, alone. In London he preferred Battersea and Wapping to Westminster and St. Paul's; in Venice little canals and *calli*, doorways and gardens, beggars and bridges made a stronger appeal to him than churches and palaces. He deliberately avoided the motives of Guardi and Canaletto. To reproduce the masterpieces of the masters is, he said, an impertinence, and he found for himself "a Venice in Venice."

Whistler, Mr. Howard Walker tells us, took a room in the Palazzo Rezzonico, where he would paint the sunset and then swear at the sun for setting. We know of no work done from the palace, though *The Palaces* which he etched are on the opposite side of the Grand Canal. Mr. Ross Turner remembers that he found Whistler in a small house with a small garden in front near the Frari, no doubt "the quarters" of which Otto Bacher speaks, and Mr. Turner remembers, too, that canvases were hanging on the wall, and a large one, with a big gondolier sketched on it, stood by the door. He was living then in the Rio San Barnaba, and there Maud came to join him. She could tell the whole story, but she will not.

Bacher says Whistler wore a "large, wide-brimmed, soft, brown hat tilted far back, suggesting a brown halo. It was a background for his curly black hair and singular white lock. . . . A dark sack-coat almost covered an extremely low turned-down collar, while a narrow black ribbon did service as a tie, the long, pennant-like ends of which, flapping about, now and then hit his single eyeglass."

Bacher describes him in evening dress without a tie, and Mr. Forbes recalls his coming without one to the Bronsons', and Bronson saying it was sad to see artists so poor that they could not afford a necktie. Bacher also quotes Whistler as always substituting "Whistler" for "I" in his talk, which we never knew him to do and it seems little like him.

Several of Duveneck's pupils followed on from Florence in 1880, and they lived in the Casa Jankovitz, the house that juts out squarely at the lower end of the Riva degli Schiavoni, all Venice in front of it. Whistler was enchanted with the place when he went to see them, and moved there. He had one room, the windows looking over the Lagoon, and from them the etchings and pastels of the Riva and the Lagoon were made. Many things are told of this room, of plates bitten on the top of the bureau, the acid running down, and the scramble to save his shirts in the drawers beneath. Other stories are of the printing-press on which Canaletto's plates may have been pulled and many of Duveneck's and Bacher's were; the press which used to work up to a certain point and then go with such a rush that it had to be stopped, for fear the bed would come out on the floor.

There was a large colony of foreign artists and art lovers and a club, English in name, really cosmopolitan, in Venice, where Whistler met Rico, Wolkoff, Van Haanen, Tito, Blaas, if he had not already met them on the Piazza. Alexander, Rolshoven, De Camp, and Bacher were with Duveneck. Harper Pennington came in the autumn, and Scott, Ross Turner, Blum, Woods, Bunney, Jobbins, and Logsdail were amongst the other men he knew. The American Consul Grist, and the Vice-Consul Graham, were persons of importance, and the United States Consulate a meeting-place. Mrs. Bronson lived in Casa Alvisi, the Brownings and the Curtises had houses in Venice, and with all three families Whistler became intimate. Londoners turned up. Harry Quilter told of one encounter:

"In the spring of 1880 I spent a few weeks in Venice. I had been drawing for about five days, in one of the back canals, a specially beautiful doorway, when one morning I heard a sort of war-whoop, and there was Whistler, in a gondola, close by, shouting out as nearly as I can remember: 'Hi, hi! What! What! Here, I say, you've got my doorway!' 'Your doorway? Confound your doorway!' I replied. 'It's my doorway, I've been here for the last week.' 'I don't care a straw, I found it out first. I got that grating put up.' 'Very much obliged to you, I'm sure; it's very nice. It was very good of you.' And so for a few minutes we wrangled, but seeing that the canal was very narrow, and that there was no room for two gondolas to be moored in front of the chosen spot, mine being already tied up exactly opposite, I asked him if he would not come and work in my gondola. He did so, and, I am bound to say, turned the tables on me cleverly. For, pretending not to know who I was, he described me to myself, and recounted the iniquities of the art critic of the *Times*, one 'Arry Quilter.'"

Everybody says Whistler was penniless in Venice, always borrowing, why, we do not know, unless the money went to pay for things in London. But there were dinners and Sunday breakfasts. Many were given in a little open-air *trattoria*, near the Via Garibaldi. The Panada, the noisiest of noisy restaurants, was one of his haunts, and there was another opposite the old post-office. The food, "nothing but fowl," he wrote, tired him so that he surprised himself by spending a fortune on tea, and carrying home strange pieces of fat, which he tried to fry into resemblance of the slices of bacon served by Mrs. Cossens, his Chelsea housekeeper. Mr. Scott says:

"If Whistler could not lay a table, he knew how to turn out tasty little dishes over a spirit-lamp; and it was not long before the inevitable Sunday breakfasts were instituted in that little room. *Polenta à l'Américaine*, which he had induced the landlady to prepare under his direction, we used to eat with such sort of treacle, alias golden syrup, as could be obtained. Fish was cheaper and more plentiful then than now in the Water City, and the lanky serving-women could fry with the best of the famous Ciozzotte. The 'thin red wine' of the country, in large flasks at about sixpence a quart, was plentiful, and these simple things, with the accompanying 'flow of soul' made a feast for the gods. There was no room for many guests at one time, but Henry

Woods, Ruben, W. Graham, Butler, and Roussoff were often with us."

Days were spent on the Lido, and, doubtless he went to Chioggia, Murano, Burano, and Torcello. These little journeys were more costly and difficult then than now, and there are no plates except of the *Lido* and the *Murano Glass-Furnace*, and no pastels except one or two on the Lido.

Whistler loved the nights at the never-closed clubs in the Piazza, Florian's and the Quadri, or the Orientale on the Riva, where the coffee was just as good and two *centessimi* cheaper. Around these nights endless legends are growing, and like all the legends, they are such a part of Whistler they cannot be ignored. No one delighted in them more than he, no one ever told them so well. They became the favourite yarns of Duveneck's boys, to which we listened many an evening when we came to Venice four years later. It was then we first heard of Wolkoff, or Roussoff as he is known in Bond Street, and his boast that he could make pastels like Whistler's and the Americans' bet of a champagne dinner that he couldn't, and the evening in the Casa Jankovitz, when Rico, Duveneck, Curtis, Bacher, Woods, and Van Haanen recognised Wolkoff's work and every time one of his pastels was produced cried: "Take it away!" The Russian said to Whistler after dinner: "You know, you scratch a Russian, and you find a Tartar!" "Ha ha!" said Whistler, "I've scratched an artist and found an ama-Tartah!" Another story was of the tiny glass figure, or maybe a little black baby from the shrine of St. Anthony at Padua, dropped into Whistler's glass of water at the *café*, where it looked like a little devil bobbing up and down, so that Whistler, when he saw it, thought something was wrong with his eyes, and sipped the water and shook the glass, and the more he sipped and shook the more the little devil danced, and finally he upset the glass over everybody, and the little demon fell in his lap. And there was another of the night when a *barca*, with a transparency showing Nocturnes and a band playing "Yankee-Doodle," moved up and down the Grand Canal and along the Riva, never stopping until it was greeted with a loud "Ha ha!" from the darkness. And we heard of the day when Whistler, seeing Bunney on a scaffold struggling with St. Mark's, his life-work for Ruskin, fastened a card, "I am totally blind," to his coat-tail. And we were

told of the hot noon when Whistler, leaning out of his window, discovering a bowl of goldfish below on the window-ledge of his landlady, against whom he had a grudge, let down a fishing-line, caught the fish, fried them, dropped them back into the bowl, and watched the return of their owner, who was sure her fish had been fried by the sun. And the story of Blum and Whistler, without a *schei*, crossing the Academy Bridge, Blum sticking in his eye a little watch with a split second-hand that went round so fast the keeper thought he had the evil eye, and they got over without paying; or of the boys' farewell *fête* to Whistler in August when it was rumoured he was going, and in a coal barge, which Bacher transforms into a "fairy-like floating bower festooned with the wealth of autumn," a feast of melons and salads and Chianti was spread and eaten as they drifted up the Grand Canal with the tide, the lights of their lanterns bringing everyone to stare, until the rain drove them under the Rialto, where they spent the rest of the night, and then Whistler didn't go after all. When Whistler left they say he asked the authors of these adventures up to his room and showed them a number of prints, and said, "Now, you boys have been very good to me all this time and I want to do something for you," and he turned over his prints carefully, and said, "I have thought it out," and he took one, a spoiled one, and he counted their heads, and he cut it into as many pieces as there were people, and presented a fragment to each, and as they marched downstairs all they heard was "Ha ha!" These, and hundreds like them, are the legends you hear on the Piazza.

Two friends of the Venetian days, Mr. Harper Pennington and Mr. Ralph Curtis, have sent us their impressions. Mr. Harper Pennington writes us: "He gave me many lessons there in Venice. He would hook his arm in mine and take me off to look at some Nocturne that he was studying or memorising, and then he would show me how he went about to paint it—in the daytime. He let me—invited me, indeed, to stand at his elbow as he set down in colour some effect he loved from the natural things in front of us. What became of many such—small canvases, all of them—I do not know. *The St. George Nocturne*, Canfield has. Who owns *The Façade of San Marco*? *

* Mr. J. J. Cowan was for some years the owner, and he sold it to the French Gallery.

"There was an upright sunset, too, looking from my little terrace on the Riva degli Schiavoni over towards San Giorgio, and others that I saw him work on in 1880."

Mr. Curtis gives us other details: "Shortly before his return to England with some of the etchings and the pastels, he gave his friends a tea-dinner. As seeing the best of his Venetian work was the real feast, the hour for the *hors d'œuvre*, consisting of sardines, hard-boiled eggs, fruit, cigarettes, and excellent coffee prepared by the ever-admirable Maud, was arranged for six o'clock. Effective pauses succeeded the presentation of each masterpiece. During these *entr'actes* Whistler amused his guests with witty conjectures as to the verdict of the grave critics in London on 'these things.' One of his favourite types for sarcasm used to be the eminently respectable Londoner who is '*always* called at 8.30, closed-shaved at a quarter to 9, and in the City at 10.' 'What will he make of *this*? Serve him right too! Ha ha!'

"Whistler was a constant and ever-welcome guest at Casa Alvisi, the hospitable house of Mrs. Bronson, whom he often called *Santa Cattarina Seconda*. During happy years, from lunch till long past bedtime, her house was the open rendezvous for the rich and poor, the famous and the famished, *les rois en exil* and the heirs-presumptive to the thrones of fame. Whistler there had his place, and he held the floor. One night a curious contrast was the great and genial Robert Browning commenting on the projected form of a famous 'Jimmy letter' to the *World*.

"Very late, on hot *scirocco* nights, long after the concert crowd had dispersed, one little knot of men might often been seen in the deserted Piazza, sipping refreshment in front of Florian's. You might be sure that was Whistler in white duck, praising France, abusing England, and thoroughly enjoying Italy. He was telling how he had seen painting in Paris revolutionised by innovators of powerful handling: Manet, Courbet, Vollon, Regnault, Carolus Duran. He felt far more enthusiasm for the then recently resuscitated popularity of Velasquez and Hals.

"The *ars celare artem* of Terborgh and Vermeer always delighted him—the mysterious technique, the discreet distinction of execution, the 'one skin all over it,' of the minor masters of Holland was one of

his eloquent themes. To Whistler it was a treat when a Frenchman arrived in Venice. If he could not like his paint, he certainly enjoyed his language. French seemed to give him extra exhilaration. From beginning to end he owed much to the French for first recognising what he had learned from Japan."

CHAPTER XXII : VENICE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-NINE AND EIGHTEEN EIGHTY CONTINUED.

Nothing in Whistler's life is more astonishing than the praise and blame raised by the Venetian pastels on their exhibition in London. Artists fought over them. To some, they were original, they gave the character of Venice; to others, they were cheap, anybody could do them. Both were wrong, as both always were. "Anybody" cannot do them; he had been making pastels: the subject, not the method, was new. Had some of the combatants visited the Academy at Venice, they might have discovered his inspiration in the drawings of the Old Masters, where he had found it years before at the Louvre. He was only carrying on tradition.

Whistler used coloured paper for the pastels because it gave him, without any work, the foundation of his colour-scheme in the simplest manner, and because he could work straight away on it, and not ruin the surface and tire himself getting the tone. Bacher describes him in his gondola laden with pastels. But his materials were so few that he could wander on foot in the narrow streets, the best way to work as everyone who has worked in Venice knows. For it is difficult to find again a place, and impossible to see again the effect, that fascinated you. He carried only a little portfolio or drawing-board, some sheets of tinted paper, black chalk, half a dozen pastels, and varnished or silver-coated paper to cover the drawing when finished. Once he found what he wanted, he made a sketch in black chalk and then with pastel hinted the colour of the walls, the shutters, the spots of the women's dresses, putting in the colour as in mosaic or stained glass between the black lines, never painting, but noting the right touch in the right place, keeping the colour pure. It looked so easy, "only the doing it was the difficulty," he would say. When

WHISTLER IN HIS STUDIO

OIL

In the Chicago Art Institute

(*See page* 130)

MAUD STANDING

ETCHING. G. 114

(*See page* 125)

he finished the drawings he showed them. Mr. Scott recalls that "the latest pastels used to be brought out for inspection. Whistler would always show his sketches in his own way or not at all. In the absence of a proper easel and a proper light, they were usually laid on the floor."

The "painter fellows" were startled by their brilliancy, Whistler told his mother, and he thought rather well of them himself.

The pastels have been praised with the inconsequence characteristic of so much praise of his work. The drawing often is either not good in itself or so slight as to be of little importance. The beauty is in the suggestion of colour or the arrangement of line. Though he passed the spring, summer, winter, and part of two autumns in the city there is no attempt, save in a few sunsets, to give atmospheric effect, or the season, or the time of year. What he saw that pastel would do, what he made it do, was to record certain lines and to suggest certain colours. Critics and artists, having never studied pastel, were unaware of what had been done with it. The revival did not come for some years after Whistler showed his Venetian series, when there was a "boom" all over the world, and pastel societies were started, most of which have since collapsed.

The "boom" in etching commenced years before Whistler went to Venice. There were standards: Whistler had already accomplished great things, after a formula laid down by Dürer, Rembrandt, and Hollar. Therefore, when he made etchings which struck the uncritical, and even those who cared, as something new, the uncritical were shocked because their preconceived notions were upset, and those who cared were astonished. The difference between the Venetian and the London plates was so great that the two series might be attributed to two men. This was due partly to the difference between London and Venice seen by an artist sensitive to the character of places, but more to the difference of technique between the earlier and the later plates. Not so many years ago, talking to him about this subject, we said that the Venetian plates seemed to be done in a new way. It so happened that the *Adam and Eve—Old Chelsea* and *The Traghetto* were, as they are now, hanging almost side by side on our walls. In five minutes he proved that one was the outgrowth of the other, and that there was a natural development from the

beginning of his work. Until the London Memorial Exhibition it was impossible to trace this, because the prints had never been hung together chronologically, not even at the Grolier Club, in New York, where, for want of space, two separate shows were made. Before Whistler exhibited his Venetian plates most people knew nothing but the French Set and the Thames Set. The intermediate stages had not been followed, and the Venetian plates seemed a new thing. But the difference between them and the Thames series is one of development. Whistler always spoke of the *Black Lion Wharf* as boyish, though it is impossible to conceive of anything of its kind more complete. His estimate has been accepted by many. Mr. Bernhard Sickert, in writing of it, thinks it misleading to say that every tile, every beam has been drawn. "These details are merely filled in with a certain number of strokes of a certain shape, accepted as indicating the materials of which they are constructed." When an etching is in pure line and owes little to the printer, as in this case, it is the wonderful arrangement of lines, the wonderful lines themselves, which make you feel that everything, every beam and every tile, has been drawn; that every detail actually has been drawn we did not suppose anybody would be so absurd as to imagine. The character of the lines gives you this impression, which is exactly what the artist wanted, and this is what proved Whistler an impressionist. Another critic has said that Whistler exhausted all his blacks on the houses. He did nothing of the sort. He concentrated them there, and did not take away from the interest of the wharf he was drawing by an equal elaboration in the boats, the barges, and the figures. As he learned more he gave up his literal, definite method. Instead of drawing the panes of a window in firm outline, he suggested them by drawing the shadows and the reflected lights with short strokes, and scarcely any outline. In the London plates he got the effect on his buildings by different bitings. In Venice he suggested the shadows. In both, the figures in movement are nearly the same, but there is a great advance in the drawing in the Venice plates, where they give the feeling of life. In the *Millbank* and the *Lagoon*, the subjects, or the dominating lines in the subjects, are the same, a series of posts carrying the eye from the foreground to the extreme distance, but their treatment in the Venetian plate, as well as the drawing of the figures, is more

expressive. Simplicity of expression has never been carried further. Probably the finest plate, in its simplicity and directness, is *The Bridge*. Whistler now obtained the quality of richness by suggesting detail, and also by printing. In *The Traghetto* there is the same scheme as in *The Miser* and *The Kitchen*, but the Venice plate is more painter-like. Without taking away from the etched line he has given a fullness of tone which makes the background of *The Burgomaster Six* weak in comparison. And he knew this.

He was doing his own printing for the first time to any extent. There were a hundred prints of the first Venice Set. All were not pulled by him, and the difference between his printing and Goulding's, done after his death, is unmistakable. In the hand of any professional printer plates like *The Traghetto* and *The Beggars* would be a mass of scratches, though scratches of interest to the artist; it required Whistler's printing to bring out what he wanted. And it is the more surprising that he could print in Venice, so primitive was the press. Bacher had a portable press, but most was done on the old press. Whistler protested against the professional printer, his pot of treacle and his couches of ink. But no great artist ever carried the printing of etchings so far or made such use of printer's ink as he did in these plates. Without the wash of ink, they would be ghosts, and he was justified in printing as he wanted to get what he wished. And he used ink in all sorts of ways on the same plate, he tried endless experiments with ever-varying results, even to cover up the weak lines of an indifferent design, as in *Nocturne—Palaces*, prized highly by collectors, but one of his poorest Venice plates. It, and *The Garden*, *Nocturne—Shipping*, and one or two besides are by no means equal to the others in line, though some of his prints of these are superb. But there are no such perfect plates in the world as *The Beggars*, *The Traghetto*, the two *Rivas*, *The Bridge*, and *Rialto*.

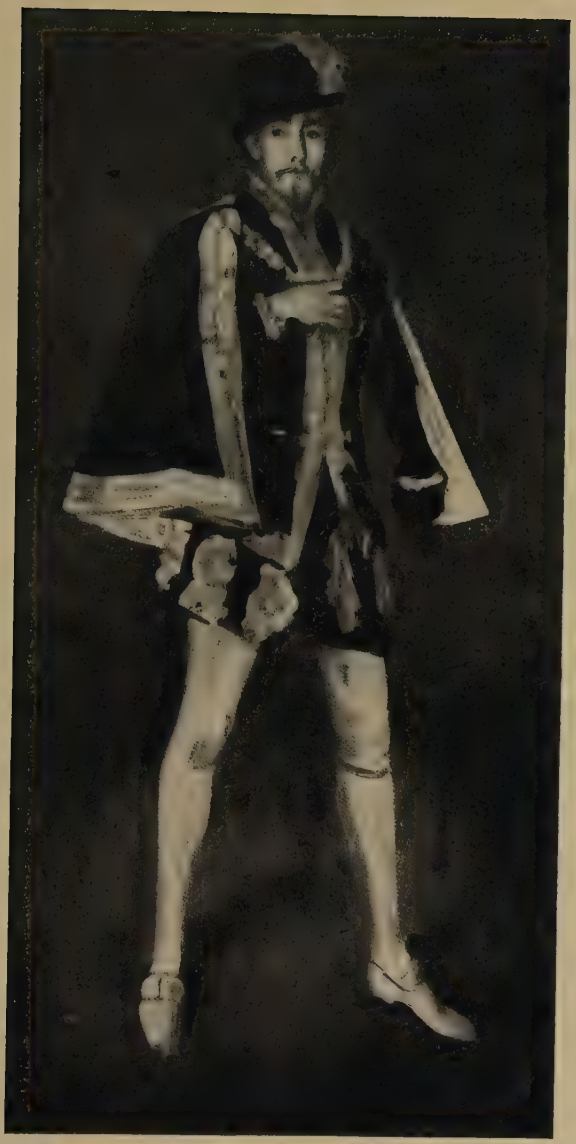
While printing Whistler continually worked on his plates, and instead of there being—as the authorities say—half a dozen states there are a hundred; only the authorities cannot see. A curious fact about *The Traghetto* is that there were two plates. He was displeased with the first and etched it again. Bacher writes that *The Traghetto* "troubled him very much." He pulled one fine proof and then overworked the plate so that he had to make

a second. He got copper of the same size and thickness made by the Venetian from whom they had their plates. When this was ready, the first plate was inked with white paint instead of black ink. This was placed on the second varnished plate, and they were then run through the press. The result was "a replica in white upon the black etching ground." Bacher says that on the new plate Whistler worked for days and weeks with the first proof before him, that he might find and etch only the original lines. When the second was printed Whistler placed the two proofs side by side and minutely compared them. And he was pleased, for the examination ended in the one song he allowed himself in Venice:

"We don't want to fight,
But, by jingo! if we do,
We've got the ships,
We've got the men,
And got the money too-oo-oo!"

The early proofs of other plates were unsatisfactory. Each proof was a trial, and, as each was pulled, he worked upon the plate, not generally taking out large slabs or putting in new passages to make a new state of it, but strengthening lines or lightening them, giving richness to a shadow or modelling to a little figure. It would be impossible, if the hundred proofs of each of these Venetian plates were not shown together, to say how much he did or what he did to each, but the first proof is quite different from the last and no two are alike. Some of them, from ghosts, became solid facts.

In his Venice etchings Whistler also developed what he called the Japanese method of drawing, Bacher calls his secret, and Mr. Menpes the secret of drawing. Whistler always spoke frankly about it to us, from the first time J. saw him etching, and he followed the same method in his lithographs. In etching or lithography it is difficult to make corrections, the surface of the plate or the stone should not be disturbed, it is not easy, by the ordinary manner in which drawing is taught, to put a complicated design on the plate without elaborate spacing, tracing, or a preliminary sketch. Frequently, when the design is half made in the usual fashion, the artist finds that the point of greatest interest, the subject of his picture, will not come on the plate where



PORTRAIT OF SIR HENRY IRVING AS
PHILIP II OF SPAIN

ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK. NO. III

OIL

In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

(See page 144)

PORTRAIT OF SIR HENRY COLE

OIL (DESTROYED)

From a photograph lent by Pickford R. Waller, Esq.

(*See page* 145)

he wants it. The Japanese always seem to get the design in their colour-prints in the right place, and yet their technique adds to the difficulty of changing or altering a design, especially in their wood blocks. But whether this is because they have the method of drawing Whistler attributed to them, whether he got his idea from their completed prints or evolved it, we do not know. We do know that the idea was his long before he painted the Japanese pictures. You can see the beginning of it in the *Isle de la Cité*. The system, scientific as all his systems were, is to select the exact spot on the canvas, the lithographic stone, the copper plate, or the piece of paper, where the focus of interest is to be, and to draw this part of the subject first. It might be near the side of a plate, though he insisted that the composition should be placed well within the frame or on the plate, contrary as such treatment is to Japanese methods and his early practice. In the early paintings, sprays of flowers or branches of trees run into the picture to give the impression that it is carried beyond the frame, as the Japanese do. But his theory, perfected before the Venetian period and adhered to as long as he lived, was that everything should be well within the frame or plate mark, as far within as the subject was from him. Having selected the point of interest, he drew that, and drew it completely, and there, on his canvas, plate, or stone, was a picture. It might be a distant view of palaces or shipping beneath a bridge; in London, a shop window; in Paris, a dark doorway; in portraits, the sitter's head. Once he put it down, he drew in the objects next in importance, all the while carrying out the work completely and making one harmonious whole. The result was that the picture was finished—"finished from the beginning"—and there was on the plate, paper, or stone a space which he could fill with less important details or leave as he chose. With his painting it was a different problem. When the subject was arranged, it grew together all over, at the same time. In some of the earlier pictures, *Old Battersea Bridge* for example, a piece of canvas seems to have been added, though he maintained that the artist should confine himself to the size of the canvas he selected, and not get over his blunders, as many do, by adding to or taking from the canvas. All this requires the greatest care in just what Whistler considered most important, the placing of the subject. Working in this manner, always with the

completed picture in his mind, he could return again, add further work if he thought it was needed, knowing he had his subject drawn. It sounds simple, so simple that one day, when he had been explaining it to Mr. E. A. Walton, and the latter said, "But there is no secret!" Whistler's answer was, "Yes, the secret is in doing it." It is just this, "in doing it," that the excellence of his work lies. As a matter of fact the difficulty is restraint in drawing the heart of a subject, while in painting still more restraint is necessary, the restraint imposed by colour and the medium.

Besides etchings and pastels Whistler made water-colours in Venice, but as they were never shown together it is impossible to say how many. There were also a few oils. The most important is *Nocturne, Blue and Gold, St. Mark's.* Bacher speaks of one from the windows of the Casa Jankovitz, "the Salute and a great deal of sky and water, with the buildings very small," and of a scene at night from a *café* near the Royal Gardens. Then there is the upright sunset from the Riva referred to by Mr. Pennington, and two others painted from Mr. Ross Turner's terrace, one looking down the Riva to San Biagio, the other up to San Marco, both full of little figures, and with boats and a suggestion of the Lagoon, in the background; studies left hanging in sunlight after he had done one day's work until he came to do the next. Mr. Forbes recalls a *Nocturne of the Giudecca*, with shipping, on a panel, which Whistler gave to Jobbins, who, as he told us, thought so little of it that he painted a sketch on the back and then sold it to Forbes, who still has it. Canfield was said to have another of S. Giorgio. Doubtless there are more, but we know of none that were exhibited.

CHAPTER XXIII: BACK IN LONDON. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY AND EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE.

At the end of November 1880 Whistler was back in London. "Years of battle," M. Duret calls the period that followed, and Whistler was ready to fight.

He arrived when the Fine Art Society had a show of "Twelve Great Etchers," a press was in the gallery, Goulding was printing, etching was upon the town.

"Well, you know, I was just home; nobody had seen me, and I drove up in a hansom. Nobody expected me. In one hand I held my long cane; with the other I led by a ribbon a beautiful little white Pomeranian dog; it too had turned up suddenly. As I walked in I spoke to no one, but putting up my glass I looked at the prints on the wall. 'Dear me! dear me!' I said, 'still the same old sad work! Dear me!' And Haden was there, talking hard to Brown, and laying down the law, and as he said 'Rembrandt,' I said 'Ha ha!' and he vanished, and then——!"

He was without house or studio, and stopped in Wimpole Street with his brother until he took lodgings in Langham Street and then in Alderney Street. (The record of this is in the etching published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, April 1881.) He set to work printing the plates, for few had been pulled in Venice. The Fine Art Society moved Goulding's press upstairs and friends came to see him, and here Mr. Mortimer Menpes says he first met Whistler, and, dropping Poynter, South Kensington, and his ambition, threw himself at the feet of "the Master" and called himself pupil. It was not an ideal workshop, and the Fine Art Society took two rooms for Whistler in Air Street, Regent Street, on the first floor, with a bow window under the colonnade, now the Piccadilly Hotel: the window from which he etched the plate of the Quadrant.

T. Way and his son came to Air Street to help Whistler print. The press was in the front room, and T. R. Way made a sketch of it in colour, his father damping paper, Whistler inking a plate, the press between them: an interesting document. The work was interrupted by excitement. One day Whistler placed on the heater a bottle of acid tightly stopped up. The stopper blew out, steaming acid fumes filled the room, and they ran for their lives. Another time, they took caustic potash, or something as deadly, to get the dried ink out of the lines of the plates, and they dropped the bottle on the floor, and there was not much left of the carpet. Why anything was left of the floor or of them is a mystery. Then, Mr. Menpes says:

"Whistler drifted into a room in my house, which I had fitted up with printing materials, and it was in this little printing-room of mine that most of the series of Venetian etchings were printed."

The edition of a hundred sets was, however, not completed during Whistler's lifetime. It was only after his death that Goulding finished the work.

The first series of twelve Venetian plates was shown in December 1880 at the Fine Art Society's. The *Twelve* were selected from the forty plates Whistler brought back. The critics could see nothing in them. They were dismissed as "another crop of Whistler's little jokes." One after another the people's authorities repeated the Attorney-General's decision that Whistler was amusing, and Burne-Jones' regret that he had not fulfilled his early promise, and Whistler collected the criticisms for future use.

Brown, of the Fine Art Society, took to New York a set of the proofs. Whistler spent a Sunday pulling them. But the etchings were no more appreciated in New York than in London. Only eight sets were ordered.

In the meanwhile Whistler was preparing his exhibition of pastels. Mr. Cole notes in his diary:

"*January* 2 (1881). Jimmy called, as self-reliant and sure as ever, full of confidence in the superlative merit of his pastels, which we are to go and see."

This exhibition also was held at the Fine Art Society's. Whistler designed the frames; he wrote the catalogue, which had the brown paper cover, but not quite the form eventually adopted, and it was printed by Way; he decorated the gallery, an arrangement in gold and brown, which was enjoyed as another of his little jokes by the critics. Godwin was one of the few who admitted the beauty, and his description in the *British Architect* (February 1881) is on record:

"First, a low skirting of yellow gold, then a high dado of dull yellow-green cloth, then a moulding of green gold, and then a frieze and ceiling of pale reddish brown. The frames are arranged on the line; but here and there one is placed over another. Most of the frames and mounts are of rich yellow gold, but a dozen out of the fifty-three are in green gold, dotted about with a view of decoration, and eminently successful in attaining it."

On the evening of the Press view Mr. Cole says:

"*January* 28 (1881). Whistler turned up for dinner very full of his private view to-morrow. Later on, we concocted a letter inviting

Prince Teck to come to it. His last draft was all right, but he would insist on beginning it 'Prince,' although I assured him 'Sir' was the usual way of addressing him in a letter."

The private view (January 29) was a crush, Bond Street blocked with carriages, the sidewalk crowded; nothing like it was ever known at the Fine Art Society's. Millais, showing forgotten *machines* in the adjoining room, was one of the first to see the pastels. "Magnificent, fine; very cheeky, but fine!" he bellowed, and afterwards said so to Whistler, who was pleased. The crowd did not know what to say, and, had they known, would have been afraid to say it. For Whistler was there, his laugh louder, shriller than ever. He let no one forget the trial. An admirer asked the price of a pastel: "Sixty guineas! That's enormous!" Whistler heard, though he was not meant to; he heard everything. "Ha ha! Enormous! Why, not at all! I can assure you it took me quite half an hour to do it!"

People laughed at Whistler's work, because they thought they were expected to. Because he was the gayest man they refused to see that he was the most serious artist. When they laughed at his art, it hurt; when they laughed at him, they suffered; and he had his revenge in mystifying them:

"Well, you know, they thought it was an amiability to me for them to be amused. One day, when I was on my way to the Fine Art Society's, while the show was going on, I met Sir and Lady ——— face to face, at the door, as they were coming out. Both looked very much bored, but they couldn't escape me. So the old man grasped my hand and chuckled, 'We have just been looking at your things, and have been so much amused!' He had an idea that the drawings on the wall were drolleries of some sort, though he could not understand why, and that it was his duty to be amused. I laughed with him. I always did with people of that kind, and then they said I was not serious."

The critics, too, laughed, but there was venom in their laughter. They liked to take themselves, if they couldn't take Whistler, seriously, and they hated work they could not understand. The pastels were sensational, Whistler was clever with a sort of transatlantic impudence. They objected to the brown paper, to the technique, to the frames, to the decorations, to the subjects; they became unexpectedly con-

cerned for the past glory of Venice. Godwin, again, was an exception. "No one who has listened, as the writer of these notes has, to Whistler's descriptions of the open-arcaded, winding staircase that lifts its tall stem far into the blue sky, or of the façades, yet unrestored, that speak of the power of the Venetian architect, can doubt that he who can so remember and describe has failed to admire. It is by reason of the strength of this admiration and appreciation that he holds back in reverence, and exercises this reticence of the pencil, the needle, and the brush."

A number of people showed their belief in the pastels by buying them, and the exhibition was a success financially. The prices ranged from twenty to sixty guineas, the total receipts amounted to eighteen hundred pounds. Bacher quotes a letter written to him just after the show opened signed "Maud Whistler": "The best of it is, all the pastels are selling. Four hundred pounds' worth the first day; now over a thousand pounds' worth are sold."

Before the show closed, at the end of January, Whistler was summoned to Hastings. His mother had been there since her illness of 1876–77, from which she never entirely recovered, though there were intervals between the attacks when her family had no cause for anxiety. But her death was sudden. Those who refused to see in Whistler any other good quality could not deny his devotion to his mother; those to whom he revealed the tenderness under the defiant masque with which he faced the world knew what his love for her meant to him. She had lived with him whenever it was possible. His visits and letters to Hastings had been frequent. He never forgot her birthday. He told her of all his success, all his hopes, and made as light as he could of his debts and disappointments. But in the miserable week before the funeral at Hastings he was full of remorse; he should have been kinder and more considerate, he said; he had not written often enough from Venice. Dr. Whistler was with him part of the time, and the Doctor's wife the rest. In the afternoons they wandered on the windy cliffs above the town, and there was one drear afternoon when he broke down: "It would have been better had I been a parson as she wanted!" Yet he had nothing to reproach himself with. The days in Chelsea were for her as happy as for him, and she whose pride had been in his first childish promise at St. Petersburg lived to see the development of his powers. She is buried at Hastings.

It was fortunate that when he got back to town there were events to distract his thoughts. The Society of Painter-Etchers opened their first exhibition in April at the Hanover Gallery. American artists who were just starting etching and had never shown prints in London were invited. Frank Duveneck sent a series of Venetian proofs. This was the occasion of "the storm in an æsthetic teapot," which, had not Whistler thought it important as "history," would be forgotten. We quote, as he did, from *The Cuckoo* (April 11, 1881):

"Some etchings, exceedingly like Mr. Whistler's in manner, but signed 'Frank Duveneck,' were sent to the Painter-Etchers' Exhibition from Venice. The Painter-Etchers appear to have suspected for a moment that the works were really Mr. Whistler's, and, not desiring to be the victims of an easy hoax on the part of that gentleman, three of their members—Dr. Seymour Haden, Dr. Hamilton, and Legros—went to the Fine Art Society's Gallery in Bond Street, and asked one of the assistants there to show them some of Mr. Whistler's Venetian plates. From this assistant they learned that Mr. Whistler was under an arrangement to exhibit and sell his Venetian etchings only at the Fine Art Society's Gallery."

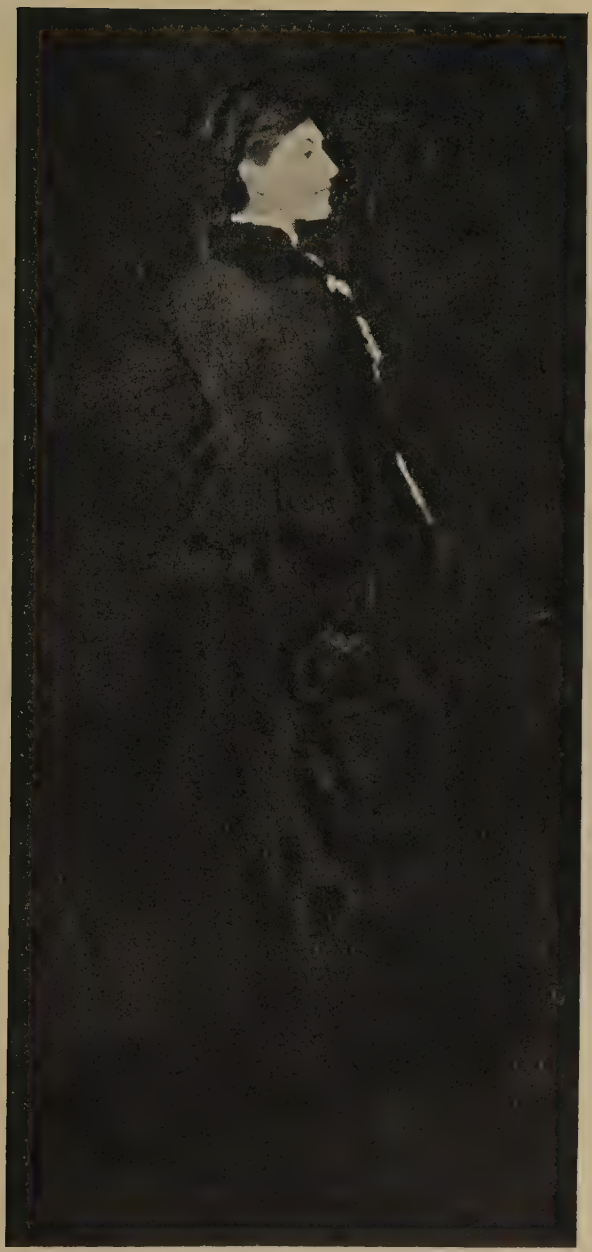
Whistler heard of this. He called on Mr. Cole, "highly incensed with Haden and Legros conspiring to make out he was breaking his contract with the Fine Art Society," and went at once to the Hanover Gallery, Mr. Menpes with him. The three members fortunately were not there. Then Haden wrote to the Fine Art Society that they had found out about Mr. Duveneck and said they were delighted with his etchings, and expressed regret. But it is incredible that Haden and Legros should have mistaken the work of Duveneck for that of Whistler. The story was published by Whistler in *The Piker Papers*. With its interest a little dulled by time, the correspondence may be read in *The Gentle Art*.

Whistler had not forgotten the pictures left with Graves in Pall Mall. By degrees he bought them back. When Mr. Algernon Graves consulted his father about letting Whistler have the pictures upon which the full amount was not paid, after Whistler had repaid a hundred pounds for three, the father said, "Let him take the whole lot, and don't be a fool; the pictures aren't worth twenty-five pounds

apiece." The *Rosa Corder* was sold at Christie's with Howell's effects, Mr. Algernon Graves agreeing that, if it brought more than Howell's debt to the firm, Howell's executors could have the balance. The father maintained the picture wouldn't fetch ten pounds, but it brought more than the amount of their bill, some hundred and thirty pounds. The *Irving* was sold to Sir Henry for a hundred pounds—at Irving's sale it was bought by Mr. Thomas of Philadelphia for five thousand guineas—and the *Miss Franklin* went to Messrs. Dowdeswell. Whistler continued to pay his bills regularly as they came due, to Graves' astonishment; there was only one exception, and then Whistler came to ask to have the payment postponed, and this was not settled until long after the pictures were in Whistler's possession. When Whistler paid the final instalment Graves expressed his surprise. But Whistler said: "You have been a very good friend to me; in fact, you have been my banker. You have acted honourably to me in the whole matter. I meant to pay, and I have done so."

These business details and his exhibitions left Whistler no time in 1881 for the *Salon*, where he had nothing, or for the Grosvenor, to which he sent only *Miss Alexander*. In the autumn, borrowing the *Mother* from Graves, he lent it to the Academy in Philadelphia, the arrangements being made by Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt, and this is her account:

"In the autumn of 1881 I was asked by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts to receive pictures by American artists, and have them forwarded for exhibition, and especially they entreated me to persuade Mr. Whistler to send a picture. He had never been represented in any American exhibition. I obtained a chance when meeting him at a dinner of pressing the subject more vigorously than I could have done by writing, and he promised to send his mother's portrait. It was collected in due course and deposited in my studio, then in the Avenue. Mr. Whistler came immediately after, and as the canvas was breaking away from the stretcher, he directed the packing agents, who were skilful frame-makers, to restrain it, and then left me. As soon as the canvas was made tight, spots of crushed varnish appeared on the surface. The varnish, in fact, broke or crumbled and I feared the canvas might have broken. I flew down the street, overtook him, and brought him back, dreading that he would blame us and even



PORTRAIT OF MISS ROSA CORDER
ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND BROWN
OIL
In the possession of H. C. Frick, Esq.

(*See page* 146)

THE PEACOCK ROOM

Photograph of the room at Prince's Gate, showing the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* in place

Now in the National Gallery of American Art, Washington

(*See page* 147)

that some injury had been done. To my surprise, he took the misfortune with perfect composure and kindness, and stippled the spots with some solvent varnish that soon restored the even surface. And there was never a word of suggestion that we had done any harm. Of course, I knew the fault was not in anything that had been done, and it was by his own order, but from all I had heard about him I trembled. The greatest difficulty in connection with that exhibition was to persuade him to journey to the American Consulate in St. Helen's Place and make his affidavit for the invoice. It had to be done by himself; and it was not pleasant, as we know, to waste a day, the very middle of the day, in this dull declaration of American citizen sojourning in England. After the cases were ready for shipment there was still delay to get his task accomplished, and I think the Pennsylvania Academy hardly guess how much persuading it took. What a pity they did not secure the beautiful picture for his own country! Now that it hangs in the Luxembourg, they envy it."

The *Mother* was exhibited at the Pennysylvania Academy in 1881, and, on the suggestion of Mr. Alden Weir, at the Society of American Artists in New York in 1882, and it could have been bought for a thousand dollars. Although nobody wanted it, it made him known in his own country as a painter. He was elected a member of the Society of American Artists that year.

At this time, owing to the visit of Seymour Haden to the United States, American artists became interested in etching, and societies were formed and exhibitions held all over the country. There was a show in the Boston Museum in 1881. Another, the first of a series, was given by the New York Etching Club in 1882. And the Philadelphia Society of Etchers organised in the same year an International Exhibition at the Academy of Fine Arts. Articles in *Scribner's* on Whistler and Haden and American Etchers added to the interest. Messrs. Cassell and others issued portfolios of prints, and every painter became an etcher. The result was a boom, then a slump, out of which Whistler and Haden almost alone emerged, for the reason that their work was not done to please the public or the publishers. We remember the excitement made by Haden's lectures which prepared America for Whistler, whose prints were in both the New York and Philadelphia Exhibitions. Mr. James L. Claghorn, almost the only Philadelphian

who then cared for etchings, had already many Whistlers. Mr. Avery, in New York, had some years before begun his collection and secured for it many of the rarest proofs, and he was followed by Mr. Howard Mansfield, who later on interested Mr. Charles L. Freer. But in America more had been heard of Whistler's eccentricities than his work. It could no longer remain unknown, once his etchings and the portrait of the *Mother* were seen and *The White Girl* was lent to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where it hung for some time. And the young men who had been with him in Venice, coming back, spread his fame at home, and when Americans got to know his work they became the keenest to possess it. Even at this time Avery owned the *Whistler in the Big Hat*, Mr. Whittemore *The White Girl*, and Mrs. Hutton the *Wapping*. That an American artist's works should be bought at all by Americans at that date was extraordinary. Tadema, Bouguereau, Meyer von Bremen were the standard, soon, however, to be exchanged for Whistler, the Impressionists, and the Dutch and Barbizon Schools.

CHAPTER XXIV: THE JOY OF LIFE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR.

ON May 26, 1881, Mr. Cole "met Jimmie, who is taking a new studio in Tite Street, where he is going to paint all the fashionables; views of crowds competing for sittings; carriages along the streets."

It was No. 13, close to the White House. Whistler decorated it in yellow: one "felt in it as if standing inside an egg," Howell said. He again picked up blue and white, and old silver; he again gave Sunday breakfasts, and they again became the talk of the town and he the fashion. If the town was determined to talk, Whistler was willing it should. He was never so malicious, never so extravagant, never so joyous. He wrapped himself "in a species of misunderstanding." He filled the papers with letters. London echoed with his laugh. His white lock stood up defiantly above his curls; his cane lengthened; a series of collars sprang from his long overcoat; his hat had a curlier brim, a lower tilt over his eyes; he invented amazing costumes: "in great form, with a new fawn-coloured long-skirted frock-coat,

and extraordinary long cane," Mr. Cole found him one summer day in 1882. He was known to pay calls with the long bamboo stick in his hand and pink bows on his shoes. He allowed no break in the gossip. The carriages brought crowds, but not sitters. Few would sit to him before the trial; after it there were fewer. In the seventies it needed courage to be painted by Whistler; now it was to risk notoriety and ridicule. Lady Meux was the first to give him a commission. Two of his three large full-lengths of her are amongst his most distinguished portraits. She was handsome, of a luxuriant type, her full-blown beauty a contrast to the elusive loveliness of Maud in the *Fur Jacket*, or Mrs. Leyland, or Mrs. Huth. Whistler found appropriate harmonies. One was an *Arrangement in White and Black*. There is a sumptuousness in the velvet gown and the long cloak he never surpassed, and the firm modelling of the face, neck, and arms gives to the regal figure more solidity than he ever got before. Whistler was pleased with it, spoke of it as his " beautiful Black Lady," and Lady Meux was so well pleased that she posed a second time. In this, the *Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink*, afterwards changed to *Pink and Grey*, she wears a round hat low over her face, and a pink bodice and skirt, and stands against a pink background, and the ugly fashion of the day cannot conceal the beauty. The third portrait, as far as we can find out, was never finished. Mr. Walter Dowdeswell has a pen-and-ink drawing of it. She wears a fur cap, a sable coat, and carries a muff. For this, it is said, after differences, a maid posed and Whistler painted her face over the Lady's. Mr. Harper Pennington says: " The only time I saw Jimmy stumped for a reply was at a sitting of Lady Meux (for the portrait in sables). For some reason Jimmy became nervous, exasperated, and impertinent. Touched by something he had said, her ladyship turned softly towards him and remarked, quite softly, ' See here, Jimmy Whistler! You keep a civil tongue in that head of yours, or I will have in some one to *finish* those portraits you have made of me! ' with the faintest emphasis on ' finish.' Jimmy fairly danced with rage. He came up to Lady Meux, his long brush tightly grasped, and actually quivering in his hand, held tight against his side. He stammered, spluttered, and finally gasped out, ' How dare you? How dare you? ' but that, after all, was *not* an answer, was it? Lady Meux did not sit again. Jimmy never

spoke of the incident afterwards, and I was sorry to have witnessed it."

At the time of the London Memorial Exhibition Lady Meux offered the Committee the two portraits in her possession on condition that the third should be returned to her. This the Committee were unable to do, and it was not until her will was published after her death, in January 1911, in which she bequeathed the missing picture and the correspondence relating to it to the National Gallery, that any more was heard about it. Then a statement appeared in a New York paper that the portrait was in the collection of Mr. Freer, and Miss Birnie Philip stated in the *Times* that Whistler had destroyed the picture which, according to Lady Meux in her will, "was ordered and paid for by her husband, but it had never come into his possession nor could it be found."

Sir Henry Cole posed for a second portrait and Whistler got back from Mr. Way the first, discovered in one of the rolls of canvases he bought at the sale. Mr. Cole saw the second portrait in the studio:

"*February* 26 (1882). Found his commencement of my father, good but slight, full length, evening clothes, long dark cloak thrown back, red ribbon of Bath."

"*April* 17 (1882). In spite of his illness, my father to Whistler's, who fretted him by not painting; my father thought that Jimmy had merely touched the light on his shoes, and nothing else, although he stood and sat for over an hour and a half."

This was the last sitting. The next day Sir Henry Cole died suddenly: a distinguished official lost to England, a friend lost to Whistler. Eldon, an artist much with Whistler at the time, was in the studio on the 17th, and recalled afterwards that Sir Henry Cole's last words on leaving were, "Death waits for no man!" Whistler meant to go on with the portrait. On May 2 Mr. Cole went again to Tite Street: "After a long delay, Jimmy showed me his painting of my father, which J. can make into a very good thing."

It is said not to have been finished, but we possess a photograph of it which shows no want of finish. This also, Mr. Cole was informed, Whistler destroyed. Neither was a full-length of Eldon finished: a fine thing, to judge from the photograph we have seen. It also has vanished, though a small half-length, sent to the London Memorial

Exhibition, but not hung—it may be a copy—is now in New York. During the next few years other portraits were begun, and of several we have photographs which it is not possible to identify. An *Arrangement in Yellow* was of Mrs. Langtry. For a new version of his scheme of "blue upon blue" Miss Maud Waller posed. Mrs. Marzetti, her sister, who went with her to the studio, writes:

"The sittings commenced in the early part of 1882. We went two or three times, and then Whistler painted the face out, as it was not to his liking, although most people thought it excellent. In those days Maud was very beautiful. The picture was started on a canvas that already had a figure on it, and it was turned upside down, and the *Blue Girl's* head painted in between the legs. The dress was made by Mme. Alias, the theatrical costumier, to Whistler's design, and I believe cost a good deal. In the end the picture was finished from another model (I do not know who), and was hung in one of Whistler's exhibitions in Bond Street [*Notes, Harmonies, Nocturnes*, May 1884, at Dowdeswell's]: it is No. 31 in the catalogue, and called *Scherzo in Blue—The Blue Girl.* This was the same exhibition in which he hung the picture he gave me, and which in the end I never got (No. 66, *Bravura in Brown*). I should have treasured it for two reasons: Whistler's painting, and also that it was a portrait of Mr. Ridley. The picture of Maud was to have been at the Grosvenor Gallery, but was not finished. However, it was sent in for the private view, and taken away again the same night or next morning. We used thoroughly to enjoy our visits to the studio—that is to say, I did, because I sat and looked on. I can't say whether Maud enjoyed them as much; probably not, as we used to get down there about eleven o'clock, have lunch, and stay all the afternoon, most of which time she was standing.

"I cannot remember all the callers we used to see there, as there were so many, but some of the more frequent visitors I remember well. There was one man who was always there, all day long, and we just hated him; I don't know why, as he seemed very harmless. He was Whistler's shadow. I don't know who he was, but have an idea that he used to write a bit. I think he was very poor, and that Whistler pretty well kept him. I heard some few years ago that he died in a lunatic asylum. Oscar Wilde was a frequent visitor, also Walter Sickert.

Whistler used to say, 'Nice boy, Walter!' he was very fond of him then. Others I remember were two brothers named Story, Frank Miles (who had a studio just opposite Whistler's)—Renée Rodd as Whistler used to call him—Major Templar, Lady Archie Campbell, and Mrs. Hungerford. Whistler was just finishing the portrait of Lady Meux, and I stood for him one day for about five minutes. It was a full-length portrait in black evening dress, with a big white cloak over the shoulders.

"Whistler was a most entertaining companion; he was very fond of telling us Edgar Allan Poe's stories, and also of reciting *The Lost Lenore*, which he said was his favourite poem. He dined with us several times in Lyall Street; he was always late for dinner, sometimes half an hour, and I think on more than one occasion was sound asleep at the table before the end of the dinner.

"Whistler's usual breakfast, which he often had after we arrived at the studio, was two eggs in a tumbler, beaten up with pepper, salt, and vinegar, bread and coffee. . . .

"Whistler stood yards away from the picture with his brush, and would move it as though he were painting; he would then jump across the room, and put a dab of paint on the canvas; he also used to wet his finger and gently rub portions of his picture. I have often seen him take a sponge with soap and water and wash the Blue Girl's face (on the canvas, I mean)."

Lady Archibald Campbell, also posing for Whistler, said: "He was a great friend of ours. I think I sat to him during a year or so, off and on, for a great many studies in different costumes and poses. His first idea was to paint me in court dress. The dress was black velvet, the train was silver satin with the Argyll arms embroidered in appliqué in their proper colours. He made a sketch of me in the dress. The fatigue of standing with the train was too great, and he abandoned the idea. In all these studies he called my attention to his method of placing his subject well within the frame, explaining that a portrait must be more than a portrait, must be of value decoratively. He never patched up defects, but, if dissatisfied with any portion of his work, covered the canvas afresh with his first impression freshly recorded. The first impression thrown on the canvas he often put away, often destroyed. Among others, he made in oils an

impression of me as Orlando, in the forest scene of *As You Like It*, at Coombe. He considered this successful. A picture he called *The Grey Lady* was a harmony in silver greys. I remember thinking it a masterpiece of drawing, giving the impression of movement. I was descending a stair, the canvas was of a great height, and the general effect striking. It was almost completed when my absence from town prevented a continuance of the sittings. When I returned he asked to make a study of me in the dress in which I called upon him. This is the picture which he exhibited under the name of *The Brodequin Jaune*, or *The Yellow Buskin*. As far as I remember it was painted in a few sittings. When I saw him shortly before his death I asked after *The Grey Lady*. He laughed and said he had destroyed her."

Mr. Walter Sickert has recorded a number of interesting details about these pictures, though his statements are vague. He says that the canvases had a grey ground " made with black and white mixed with turpentine," and that Whistler used a medium of oil and turpentine, and " covered thinly the whole canvas with his prepared tones, using house-painters' brushes for the surfaces, and drawing lines with round hogshair brushes nearly a yard long. . . . His object was to cover the whole canvas at one painting—either the first or the hundredth." Lady Archibald asked him if he was going to touch up her portrait at the last sitting. Whistler said, " Not touch it up, give it another beautiful skin." Mr. Sickert also very aptly suggests the reason why some of the portraits were never completed. Whistler did them all over, again and again, till they were " finished—or wrecked, as often happened, from the sitter getting tired, or growing up, or growing old." Almost the only new fact in Mr. Frank Rutter's *Whistler* is given him by Mr. Sickert, who says he remembers once Whistler standing on a chair with a candle at the end of a sitting from Lady Archibald Campbell, looking at his work, but undecided whether he should take it out or leave it. They started to dinner, and in the street he decided, saying, " You go back. I shall only be nervous and begin to doubt again. Go back and take it all out." This, Mr. Sickert says he did, with a rag and benzoline.

M. Duret suggests that the ridicule of her friends had an effect on Lady Archibald Campbell, or perhaps her beauty made her critical;

anyhow, she suggested changes to Whistler, who, though he seldom accepted suggestions from his sitters, did his best to meet her, until it seemed as if, to please her, he must repaint the picture, and he was discouraged. We have heard of a scene outside the studio: Lady Archibald in a hansom on the point of driving away never to return; M. Duret springing on the step and representing the loss to the world of the masterpiece, and arguing so well that she came back, and *The Yellow Buskin* was saved from the fate of *The Grey Lady* and *The Lady in Court Dress*. Some think the portrait that was finished is Whistler's greatest. It has distinction and character. It is another *Arrangement in Black* in which critics could then discover but dinginess and dirt. One wit described it as a portrait of a lady pursuing the last train through the smoke of the Underground. People have learned to see, or at least to think they should see, beauty, and to-day they hardly dare deny it is a masterpiece. Whistler called it first the *Portrait of Lady Archibald Campbell*, but afterwards *The Yellow Buskin*, the title in the Wilstach Collection, Philadelphia, where it now hangs.

Mr. Walter Sickert tells an amusing story of Whistler's way sometimes of meeting the suggestions of sitters:

"I remember an occasion when Whistler, yielding to persuasion, allowed himself to introduce, step by step, certain modifications in the scheme of the portrait that he was painting. As time went on he saw his own conception overlaid with an image that he had never intended. At last he stopped and put his brushes slowly down. Taking off his spectacles, he said, 'Very well, that will do. This is your portrait. We will put it aside and finish it another day.' 'Now, if you please,' he added, dragging out a new grey canvas, 'we will begin mine.'"

M. Duret posed to Whistler at the same time as Lady Archibald Campbell. When she could not come Whistler would telegraph him, and day by day he watched the progress of her portrait while he was growing. Business brought M. Duret to London. He had always been much with artists in Paris, had been intimate with Courbet, was still with Fantin, Manet, and Bracquemond. He recognised the genius of men at whom the world scoffed, and it was he who by an article in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (April 1881) made the French realise their mistake of years, and again give Whistler the place so long denied him.

DRAWING IN WASH FOR A CATALOGUE OF BLUE AND WHITE NANKIN PORCELAIN

In the possession of Pickford R. Waller, Esq.

(*See page 157*)

STUDY

LITHOTINT. W. 2

From a print lent by T. R. Way, Esq.

(*See page* 157)

One evening in 1883, after a private view, Whistler and Duret were talking over the pictures they had seen, and in discussing the portrait of the President of some society, Whistler declared that red robes of office were not in character with modern heads, and that a man should be painted in the costume of his time, and he asked Duret to pose to him that he might show what could be done with evening dress, the despair of painters. The experiment was not so original as Duret seemed to think. Leyland was painted in this way ten years before, when Whistler proved the truth of Baudelaire's assertion that the great colourist can get colour from a black coat, a white shirt, against a dark background. Sir Henry Cole also posed in evening dress. Whistler did not rely entirely upon so simple a scheme in his portrait of Duret, who has a pink domino over his arm, a red fan in his hand. His portrait is called *Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Black*.

M. Duret describes Whistler at work. He marked slightly with chalk the place for the figure on the canvas, and began at once to put it in, in colour; at the end of the first sitting the scheme was there. This was the method that delighted Whistler. The difficulty with him was not to begin a portrait, but to finish it. The painting was brought almost to completion, rubbed out, begun again, and repainted ten times. Duret saw that it was a question not only of drawing, but of colour, of tone, and understood Whistler's theory that to bring the whole into harmony and preserve it the whole must be repainted as a whole, if there was any repainting to be done. There are finer portraits, but not many that show so well Whistler's meaning when he said that colour is "the arrangement of colour." The rose of the domino, the fan, and the flesh is so managed that the cold grey of the background seems to be flushed with rose. Duret, when he showed the picture, took a sheet of paper, cut a hole in it, and placed it against the background, to prove that the grey, when surrounded by white, is pure and cold without a touch of rose, and that Whistler got his effect by his knowledge of the relation of colour and his mastery of tone.

The *Lady Meux—Black and White* went to the *Salon* of 1882, catalogued as *Portrait de M. Harry—Men*, to the confusion of commentators. The *Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink* was shown at the Grosvenor with *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*, *Scherzo in Blue—The Blue Girl*, *Nocturne*

in Black and Gold—Southampton Water, Harmony in Black and Red, Note in Black and Opal—Jersey, Blue and Brown—San Brelade's Bay. The *Times* was unable to decide whether Whistler was making fun of them or whether something was wrong with his eyes. The *Pall Mall* regretted that "if the *Lady Meux* was full of fine and subtle qualities of drawing, the *Scherzo in Blue* [Miss Waller] was the sketch of a scarecrow in a blue dress without form and void. It is very difficult to believe that Mr. Whistler is not openly laughing at us when he holds up before us such a piece as this. His counterpart in Paris, the eccentric M. Manet, has at least more sincerity than to exhibit his work in such an imperfect condition."

But Whistler now had defenders. An "Art Student" wrote the next day to the *Pall Mall* to point out that "at the private, and therefore, presumably, the Press, view, *The Blue Girl* was seen in an unfinished state, having been sent there merely to take up its space on the wall. It was removed immediately, and has been since finished. Had the critic seen it since he would hardly have called it without form and void. The want of artistic sincerity is certainly the last charge that can be brought against a man who has followed his artistic intention with such admirable and unswerving singleness of purpose."

From this time onward Whistler no longer fought his battles alone.

Eighteen eighty-two was the year of *The Paddon Papers*. Mr. Cole noted in his diary: "*September* 24. To Jimmy's. He lent me proof of his Paddon and Howell correspondence. Amusing, but too personal for general interest." We agree with Mr. Cole. There were complications of no importance with Howell, in which Paddon, a diamond merchant, figured, and complications over a Chinese cabinet which Mr. Morse bought from Whistler when he moved from No. 2 Lindsey Row. For long Mr. Morse had only the lower part, while Howell kept the top. Whistler, who thought nothing concerning him trivial, published this correspondence in a pamphlet, called *The Paddon Papers: The Owl and the Cabinet*, interesting now only because it is rare and because it was the end of all relations between himself and Howell.

In the early winter of 1883 Whistler gave the second exhibition of his Venetian etchings at the Fine Art Society's. The prints,

fifty-one in number, included several London subjects. He decorated the gallery in white and yellow. The wall was white with yellow hangings, the floor was covered with pale yellow matting and the couches with pale yellow serge. The cane-bottomed chairs were painted yellow. There were yellow flowers in yellow pots, a white and yellow livery for the attendant, and white and yellow Butterflies for his friends. At the private view Whistler wore yellow socks just showing above his shoes, and the assistants wore yellow neckties.] He prepared the catalogue; the brown paper cover, form, and size now established. He printed after each number a quotation from the critics of the past, and on the title-page, "Out of their own mouths shall ye judge them." A friend who looked over the proofs for him writes us:

"We came to 'there is merit in them, and I do not wish to understand it.' [A quotation from the article in the *Nineteenth Century* which Sir Frederick Wedmore must wish could be forgotten.] Jimmy yelled with joy, and thanked the printer for his intelligent misreading of *understate*. 'I think we will let that stand as it is,' he said. I was amused at the private view to see him discussing the question with Wedmore, who, naturally, did not think it quite fair."

Before the show opened it was, Whistler told us, "Well, you know, a source of constant anxiety to everybody and of fun to me. On the ladder, when I was hanging the prints, I could hear whispers: no one would be able to see the etchings! And then I would laugh, 'Dear me, of course not! that's all right. In an exhibition of etchings the etchings are the last things people come to see!' And then there was the private view, and I had my box of wonderful little Butterflies, and I distributed them only among the select few, so that, naturally, everybody was eager to be decorated. And when the crowd was greatest Royalty appeared, quite unprecedented at a private view, and the crowd was hustled into another room while the Prince and Princess of Wales went round the gallery, looking at everything, the Prince chuckling over the catalogue. 'I say, Mr. Whistler, what is this?' he asked when he came to the *Nocturne—Palaces*. 'I am afraid you are very malicious, Mr. Whistler,' the Princess said."

Those who received the little Butterflies thought them charming. Mrs. Marzetti writes us:

"I have a few treasures which I guard most jealously; one is the golden Butterfly that he made us wear at the private view of his exhibition in Bond Street, in the original little card box in which he sent them (three I think) to mother, with a message written on the lid, and signed with his Butterfly."

The public laughed. They thought the Butterflies added to the screaming farce, the foppery of the whole thing. The attendant in yellow and white livery was called the poached egg. The catalogue was worse. Poor Wedmore and the others could hardly like to have their blunders and blindness immortalised. Most of them made the best of it by refusing to see in him anything but the jester. His humour was compared to Mark Twain's, and he to Barnum, and the show was "excruciatingly agreeable." Some honestly thought his work rubbish, and found his last little joke dull without being cheap. Their ridicule has become ridiculous. As for Whistler's etchings, the price of the series of *Twelve*, as of the *Twenty-Six* issued a year or so later in which many of these prints were published, was fifty guineas; on May 27, 1908, the single print *Nocturne—Palaces* sold in Paris for one hundred and sixty-eight guineas, and we have been offered two hundred pounds for our *Traghetto*. The etchings were also shown in decorated rooms in Boston and Philadelphia.

For the exhibitions of 1883 he had no new work, but sent two earlier Nocturnes to the Grosvenor and to the *Salon* the *Mother*, and was awarded a third-class medal, the only recompense he ever received at the *Salon*. In the winter of 1883–84 he worked a great deal out of doors, spending many weeks at St. Ives, Cornwall. He took no interest in landscape; "there were too many trees in the country," he said. But he loved the sea, from the days of *The Blue Wave* at Biarritz and *The Shores of Brittany* until one of the last summers when he painted at Domburg, in Holland. The Cornish sketches were sent to his show of *Notes*, *Harmonies*, *Nocturnes*, at Dowdeswell's Gallery in May 1884, the first exhibition in which he included many water-colours. The medium had been difficult to him; now he was its master. He used it to record subjects as characteristic of London as the subjects of his pastels were of Venice. There were also studies and sketches in Holland, for he was always running about again. The interest of the catalogue was in the preface, *L'Envoie* he called it,

and was so laughed at not only for the place he gave it, but for the spelling, that he searched the dictionaries, and then declared, we cannot say with what authority, that *envoie* means some sort of snake. "Ha ha! that's it! Venom!" he said. The *Envoie*, without his explanation, is interesting, for it consists of the *Propositions No. 2*, which have become famous: that a picture is finished when all traces of the means that produced it have disappeared; that industry in art is a necessity, not a virtue; that the work of the master reeks not of the sweat of the brow; that the masterpiece should appear as the flower of the painter, perfect in its bud as in its bloom. He decorated the gallery: delicate rose on the walls, white dado, white chairs, and pale azaleas in rose-flushed jars. The Butterfly, tinted in rose, was on the card of invitation. The *Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Grey* was as little appreciated as the *Yellow and White* in 1883; to the critics it was a new affectation.

There were signs of appreciation when, in 1884, Whistler sent the *Carlyle* to the Loan Exhibition of Scottish National Portraits at Edinburgh, where it created an impression. There had been attempts to sell the picture. M. Duret tried to interest an Irish collector, who, however, did not dare to buy it. It was offered to Mr. Scharfe, director of the British National Portrait Gallery, who not only refused to consider the offer, but laughed at the idea that "such work should pass for painting." The first endeavour to secure it for a national collection came from George R. Halkett, who urged its purchase for the Scottish National Gallery in the *Scotsman* (October 6, 1884). He was supported by Mr. William Hole in a letter published the following day.

Unfortunately, the subscription paper disclaimed approval of Whistler's art and theories on the part of subscribers. Whistler, indignant, telegraphed to Edinburgh: "The price of the *Carlyle* has advanced to one thousand guineas. Dinna ye hear the bagpipes?" The price he had asked was four hundred, and this ended the negotiations.

Why about this time Whistler should have become involved in a Church Congress in the Lake Country, unless he was coming from or going to Scotland, we never have been able to explain. He told us about it years later, and he seemed no less amazed than we. J.

was just about to start for the Lakes, and Whistler was reminded of his excursion there. We give the note made at the time :

" *Sunday, September* 16 (1900). Whistler dined, and Agnes Repplier—not a successful combination. The dinner dragged until E. J. Sullivan happened to come in, and Whistler woke up, and, all of a sudden, we hardly know how, he was plunged into the midst of the Lake Country and a Church Congress, travelling third class with the clergy and their families, eating jam and strange meals with quantities of tea, and visiting the Rev. Mr. Green in his prison, shut up by his bishop for burning candles, and altogether the hero and important person he would never be on coming out. An amazing story, but what Whistler was doing in the Lakes with the clergy he did not appear to know ; the story was enough."

The only result of the expedition was the etching done in Cumberland, and his impression of the unpicturesqueness of the Lakes : the mountains " were all little round hills with little round trees out of a Noah's Ark." What he thought of great mountain forms we do not know for, save on the trip to Valparaiso and going to Italy, he never saw them. Yet the lines of the coast in the *Crépuscule* show that he could render mountains. But, as he said, the mountains of Cumberland are only little round hills. At the end of his life he saw the mountains of Corsica, Gibraltar, and Tangier, but there is no record.

CHAPTER XXV : AMONG FRIENDS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN.

It was in the summer of 1884 that J. met Whistler. Up to this time we have had to rely upon what Whistler and those who knew him have told us. Henceforward we write from our own knowledge.

This is J.'s story of the meeting : " I first saw Whistler July 13, 1884. I had been asked by Mr. Gilder, editor of the *Century Magazine*, to make the illustrations for a series of articles on *Old Chelsea* by Dr. B. E. Martin, and Mr. Drake, the art editor, suggested that if I could get Whistler to etch, draw, or paint something in Chelsea for the *Century*, the *Century* would be very glad to have it. His water-colours and pastels were being shown at Dowdeswell's—*Notes, Harmonies,*

Nocturnes—and there his address was given me: No. 13 Tite Street.

"The house did not strike me, I only remember the man and his work. I knocked, the door was slightly opened, and I handed in my letter from Mr. Gilder. I was left in the street. Then the door was opened wide, and Whistler asked me in. He was all in white, his waistcoat had long sleeves, and every minute it seemed as if he must begin to juggle with glasses. For to be honest, my first impression was of a bar-keeper strayed from a Philadelphia saloon into a Chelsea studio. Never had I seen such thick, black, curling hair. But in the midst was the white lock, and keen, brilliant eyes flashed at me from under the thick, bushy eyebrows.

"At the end of the hall into which he took me was a shadowy passage, then some steps, a light room beyond, and on an easel the portrait of a little man with a violin, the *Sarasate*, that had never been seen outside the studio. Whistler stopped me in the passage and asked me what I thought of the picture. I cannot recall his words. I was too overwhelmed by the dignity of the portrait to remember what he said.

"Later on he brought out *The Falling Rocket*. 'Well now, what do you think of that? What is it?'

"I said fireworks, and I supposed one of the Cremorne pictures.

"'Oh, you do, do you? Isn't it amazing? Bring tots, idiots, imbeciles, blind men, children, anything but the Islander, and they know; even you, who stole the name of my *Little Venice*.'

"This referred to an etching of mine which had been published under the title of *Little Venice*. Why Whistler did not resent this always or let it interfere with our friendship later, I do not know, for Mr. Keppel has told me he felt bitterly about it at the time.

"Whistler also showed me some of his pastels. And he talked, and I forget completely what he said until, finally, I suggested why I had come, for I did not think there was any greater honour than to see one's work in the pages of the *Century*. There was some excuse delightfully made. Then he called to someone who appeared from a corner. And Whistler said to him, 'Here's a chance for you. But you will do these things.' And that was my introduction to Mr. Mortimer Menpes.

"This was not what I had bargained for, and I said promptly, 'Mr. Whistler, I came here to ask you to let us have some drawings of Chelsea. If you cannot, why, I'll do them myself.'

"'Stay and lunch,' Whistler said, and there was lunch, a wonderful curry, in a bright dining-room—a yellow and blue room. Later on he took me down to the Embankment, and, though it seemed so little like him, showed me the Carlyle statue and Turner's house. He pointed out his own houses in Lindsey Row, and told me of a photographer who had reproduced all his pictures and photographed old Chelsea. I remember, too, asking Whistler about the Thames plates, and his telling me they were all done on the spot. And then he drove me in a cab to Piccadilly, and asked me to come and see him again.

"The next Sunday I went with Mr. Stephen Parrish to Haden's, in Hertford Street. We were taken to the top storey, where Haden was working on the mezzotint of the *Breaking up of the Agamemnon*. I asked him—I must have almost paralysed him—what he thought of Whistler, and he told me that if ever he had to sell either his collection of Whistlers or of Rembrandts, the Rembrandts should go first. He told that story often—and later they both went.—Downstairs, in a sort of conservatory at the back of the dining-room, was a printing press. Lady Haden joined us at lunch. So also did Mr. Hopkinson Smith, resurrecting vast numbers of American 'chestnuts.' I can recall that both Parrish and I found him in the way, and I can also recall his getting us into such a state that, as we came down a street leading into Piccadilly, Parrish vented his irritation on one of the public goats which in those days acted both as scavengers and police for London. As the goat put down his head to defend himself, Parrish put up his umbrella, and the goat fled into the open door of a club. What happened after that we did not wait to see.

"I saw Whistler only once again that summer. He was in Charing Cross Station, in front of the bookstall. He wore a black frock-coat, white trousers, patent leather shoes, top hat, and he was carrying, the only time I ever saw it, the long cane. I did not want to speak to him, and I liked his looks less than when I first met him.

"Early in the autumn of 1884 we went to Italy, and it was several years after our return before I got really to know him, and to understand that his appearance was to him merely a part of the 'joke of life.'"

TALL BRIDGE

LITHOGRAPH. W. 9

From a print lent by T. R. Way, Esq.

(*See page 157*)

NOCTURNE

LITHOTINT. W. 5

From a print lent by T. R. Way, Esq.

CHAPTER XXVI: AMONG FRIENDS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN CONTINUED.

Whistler said he could not afford to keep a friend, but he was never without many. A photograph taken in his studio in 1881 shows him the centre of a group, of whom the others are Julian and Waldo Story, sons of W. W. Story; Frank Miles, a painter from whom great things were expected; and the Hon. Frederick Lawless, a sculptor. In the background is a little statuette everybody wanted to know the merit of, explained one day by Whistler, "Well, you know—why, you can take it up and—well, you can set it down!" Mr. Lawless writes us that Whistler modelled the little figure, though we never heard that he modelled anything, and Professor Lantéri says he never worked in the round. Mr. Pennington suggests that the statuette was by Mr. Waldo Story, but Mr. Lawless says:

"When Whistler lived in his London studio he often modelled graceful statuettes, and one day he put up one on a vase, asking me to photograph it. I said he must stand beside it. He said, 'But we must make a group and all be photographed,' and that I was to call out to his servant when to take the lid off the camera, and when to put it back. I then developed the negative in his studio."

Mr. Francis James, often at 13 Tite Street, has many memories, specially of one summer evening when Coquelin *aîné* and a large party came to supper and Whistler kept them until dawn and then took them to see the sun rise over the Thames, a play few had ever performed in.

For two or three years no one was more with Whistler than Sir Rennell Rodd. He writes us:

"It was in '82, '83 that I saw most of him. Frank Miles, Waldo and Julian Story, Walter Sickert, Harper Pennington, and, at one time, Oscar Wilde, were constantly there. Jimmy, unlike many artists, liked a *camarade* about the place while he was working, and talked and laughed and raced about all the time, putting in the touches delicately, after matured thought, with long brushes. There was a poor fellow who had been a designer for Minton—but his head had given way and he was already quite mad—used to be there day after day for

months and draw innumerable sketches on scraps of brown paper, cartridge boards, anything—often full of talent, but always mad. Well, Jimmy humoured him and made his last weeks of liberty happy. Eventually he had to be removed to an asylum, and died raving mad. I used to help Whistler often in printing his etchings. It was very laborious work. He would manipulate a plate for hours with the ball of the thumb and the flat of the palm to get just the right superficial ink left on it, while I damped the paper, which came out of old folio volumes, the first and last sheets, with a fairly stiff brush. And often, for a whole morning's work, only one or two prints were achieved which satisfied his critical eye, and the rest would be destroyed. There was a Venetian one which gave him infinite trouble in the printing.

"He was the kindest of men, though he was handy with his cane. In any financial transaction he was scrupulously honourable, though he never had much money at his disposal.

"We had great fun over the many correspondences and the catalogues elaborated in those days in Tite Street. . . . He was demoniacal in controversy, and the spirit of elfin mischief was developed in him to the point of genius. . . . Pellegrini was much at Whistler's in those days, and in a way the influence of Whistler was fatal to him. His admiration was unbounded and he abandoned his art, in which, as Jimmy used to say, 'he had taught all the others what none of them had been able to learn,' and took to trying to paint portraits in Whistler's manner without any success.

"One of the few modern painters I have ever heard him praise was Albert Moore, and I am not sure that was not to some extent due to a personal liking for the man. It always struck me his literary judgments, if he ever happened to express any, were extraordinarily sound and brilliant in summing up the merits or demerits of a writer.

"He had an extraordinary power of putting a man in his place. I remember a breakfast which Waldo Story gave at Dieudonné's. Everyone there had painted a picture, or written a book, or in some way outraged the Philistine, with the exception of one young gentleman, whose *raison d'être* there was not so apparent as were the height of his collars and the glory of his attire. He nevertheless ventured to lay down the law on certain matters which seemed beyond his province, and even went so far as to combat some dictum of the master's, who, readjusting

his eye-glass, looked pleasantly at him, and said, 'And whose son are you?'"

For two or three years Oscar Wilde was so much with Whistler that everyone who went to the studio found him there, just as everyone who went into society saw them together. Wilde had come up from Oxford not long before the Ruskin trial, with a reputation as a brilliant undergraduate, winner of the Newdigate prize, and he now posed as the apostle of "Beauty." Many a reputation is lost between Oxford and London, but his was strengthened. Oscar's witty sayings were repeated and his youth seemed to excuse his pose. Whistler impressed him. At Oxford Wilde had followed Ruskin, and broken stones on the road which was to lead the young to art; he had read with Pater, he had accepted the teaching of Morris and Burne-Jones, and their master Rossetti. But Ruskin was impossible to follow, Pater was a recluse, Rossetti's health was broken, the prehistoric Fabians, Morris and Burne-Jones, were the foci of a little group of their own. When Wilde came to London Whistler was the focus of the world. Whistler was sought out, Wilde tried to play up. In Tite Street blue and white was used, not as a symbol of faith, but every day; flowers bloomed, not as a pledge of "culture," but for their colour and form; beauty was accepted as no discovery, but as the aim of art since the first artist drew a line and saw that it was beautiful. Whistler knew all this. Wilde fumbled with it.

Whistler was flattered by Wilde. He was looked upon as the world's jester when Wilde fawned upon him. Other young men gathered about Whistler had name and reputation to make. But Wilde's name was in every man's mouth; he glittered with the glory of the work he was to do. He was the most promising poet of his generation and he was amusing. There was a charm in his personality. We remember when we met him on his lecture tour in America, and hardly knew whether the magnificence on the platform where, in velvet knickerbockers, he faced with calmness rows of college boys each bearing a lily, and stood with composure their collective emotion as he sipped a glass of water, was more wonderful than his gaiety when we talked with him afterwards. It has been said that he gave the best of himself in his talk. If Whistler liked always to have a companion, his pleasure was increased when he found someone as brilliant. Wilde spent hours in

the studio, he came to Whistler's Sunday breakfasts, he assisted at Whistler's private views. Whistler went with him everywhere. There were few functions at which they were not present. At receptions the company divided into two groups, one round Whistler, the other round Wilde. It was the fashion to compare them. To the world that ran after them, that thought itself honoured, or notorious, by their presence, they seemed inseparable.

The trouble began when Whistler discovered how small was Wilde's knowledge of art; he could never endure anybody in the studio who did not understand. Whistler wrote of Wilde as a man "with no more sense of a picture than of the fit of a coat." *The Gentle Art* shows that Whistler was furious with Wilde's borrowing from him. That Wilde took his good where he found it is neither more nor less than what has always been done—what Whistler did. But the genius, from the good thus taken, evolves something of his own. Wilde was content to shine personally and let the great things expected of him wait. When it was a question of wit, there was no one to whom Wilde could go except Whistler. It is all expressed in the old story: "I wish I had said that, Whistler." "You will, Oscar, you will." In matters of art Wilde had everything to learn from Whistler, who, though ever generous, resented Wilde's preaching in the provinces the truths which he had taught for years. This is all in *The Gentle Art*. "Oscar" had "the courage of the opinions . . . of others!" and again: "Oscar went forth as my St. John, but, forgetting that humility should be his chief characteristic and unable to withstand the unaccustomed respect with which his utterances were received, he not only trifled with my shoe, but bolted with the latchet!"

Mr. Cole, in 1884, noted in his diary that Whistler "was strong on Oscar Wilde's notions of art which he derived from him (Jimmy)." Mr. Herbert Vivian tells the story of a dinner given by Whistler after Wilde had been lecturing:

"'Now, Oscar, tell us what you said to them,' Whistler kept insisting, and Wilde had to repeat all the phrases, while Whistler rose and made solemn bows, with his hand across his breast, in mock acceptance of his guests' applause. . . . The cruel part of the plagiarism lay in the fact that, when Whistler published his *Ten O'Clock*, many people thought it had all been taken from Wilde's lecture."

Whistler grew more and more exasperated by the use Wilde made of him. Their intimacy was closest in the early eighties when Whistler was bewildering the world deliberately; Wilde copied him clumsily. The world, that did not know them, mistook one for the other and thought Whistler as much an æsthete as Wilde. When *Patience* was produced, and when it was revived a few years ago, Bunthorne, who was Wilde, appeared with Whistler's black curls and white lock, moustache, tuft, eye-glass, and laughed with Whistler's "Ha ha!" Whistler, seeing Wilde in a Polish cap and "green overcoat befrogged and wonderfully befurred," desired him to "restore those things to Nathan's, and never again let me find you masquerading the streets of my Chelsea in the combined costumes of Kossuth and Mr. Mantalini!" To be in danger of losing his pose before the world was bad enough, but to be mistaken for another man who rendered him ridiculous was worse. No one has summed up the position better than the *Times* in a notice of Wilde's *Collected Works*:

"With a mind not a jot less keen than Whistler's, he had none of the conviction, the high faith, for which Whistler found it worth while to defy the crowd. Wilde had poses to attract the crowd. And the difference was this, that while Whistler was a prophet who liked to play Pierrot, Wilde grew into a Pierrot who liked to play the prophet."

If Whistler ever played Pierrot, it was with a purpose. Where art was concerned he was serious. Wilde was serious about nothing. His two topics were "self and art," and his interest in both was part of his bid for notoriety. He might jest about himself, but flippancy, if art was his subject, was to Whistler a crime. The only way he showed his resentment was by refusing to take Wilde seriously about anything. Even when Wilde was married, he was not allowed to forget, for Whistler telegraphed to the church, "Fear I may not be able to reach you in time for the ceremony. Don't wait." Later, in Paris, he called Wilde "Oscar, *bourgeois malgré lui*," a witticism none could appreciate better than the Parisians. As soon as he began to make a jest of Wilde he ended the companionship to which, while it lasted, London society owed much gaiety.

The relation between Whistler and artists now coming to the studio was less that of friends than of Master and Followers, as they

called themselves. He was forty-six when he returned from Venice, and there were few men of the new generation who shared none of the doubts of his contemporaries, but believed in him. The devotion of this group became infatuation. They were ready to do anything for him. Families became estranged and engagements were broken off because of him. They fought his battles; ran his errands, spied out the land for him; published his letters, and read them to everybody. They formed a court about him. They exaggerated everything, even their devotion, and became caricatures of him, as excessive in imitation as in devotion. He denied the right of any, save the artist, to speak authoritatively of art; they started a club to train the classes—Princes, Prime Ministers, Patrons, Ambassadors, Members of Parliament—to blind faith in Master and Followers. Whistler mixed masses of colours on the palette, keeping them under water in saucers. The Followers mixed theirs in vegetable dishes and kept them in milk-cans, labelled Floor, Face, Hair, Lips. He had a table-palette; they adopted it, but added hooks to hang their cans of paint on. He used his paint very liquid—the "sauce" of the Nocturnes; they used such quantities of medium that as much went on the floor as on the canvas, and, before a picture was blocked in, they were wading in liquid masterpieces. Many of his brushes were large; they worked with whitewash brushes. They copied his personal peculiarities. One evening at a dinner when he wore a white waistcoat and all the buttons, because of the laundress, came out, a Follower, seeing it buttonless, hurried from the room, and returned with his bulging, sure that he was in the movement.

Whistler accepted their devotion, and, finding them willing to squander their time, monopolised it. There was plenty for everybody to do in the studio. If they complained that he took advantage of them, he proved to them that the fault was theirs. Mr. Menpes writes:

"We seldom asked Whistler questions about his work. . . . If we had, he would have been sure to say, 'Pshaw! You must be occupied with the Master, not with yourselves. There is plenty to be done.' If there was not, Whistler would always make a task for you—a picture to be taken into Dowdeswells', or a copper plate to have a ground put on."

No one respected the work of others more than Whistler. But if others did not respect it themselves and made him a present of their time he did not refuse. If he allowed the Followers to accompany him in his little journeys, it was because they were so eager. When he went with Walter Sickert and Mortimer Menpes to St. Ives, in the winter of 1883–84, they were up at six o'clock because it pleased him ; they dared not eat till he rang the bell. They prepared his panels, mixed his colours, cleaned his brushes, taking a day off for fishing if Whistler chose, abjuring sentiment if he objected. Whistler saw the humour in their attitude and was the more exacting. The Followers were not allowed their own opinions. Once, when Walter Sickert ventured to praise Leighton's *Harvest Moon* at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, Whistler, hearing of it, telegraphed : " The Harvest Moon rises over Hampstead [where Sickert lived], and the cocks of Chelsea crow." The Followers, however, knew that if they were of use to Whistler, he was of infinitely more use to them, and that submission to his rule and exposure to his wit were a small price to pay. Mr. Sickert tells another story. He and Whistler were once printing etchings together, when the former dropped a copper plate. " How like you ! " said Whistler. Five minutes afterwards the improbable happened. Whistler, who was never clumsy, dropped one himself. There was a pause. " How unlike me ! " was his remark.

Mr. Menpes, who, in *Whistler as I Knew Him*, makes more of the follies than the privileges of the Followers, cannot ignore their debt. They worked for him not only in the studio, but in the street, hunting with him for little shops, corners and models, painting at his side, walking home with him after dinner or supper at the club, learning from him to observe and memorise the night. To them he was full of kindliness, when to the world he often seemed insolent and audacious, and after his death—even before—some denied him. Later Whistler said that the Followers were there in the studio ; yes, but they never painted there ; they were kept well in the background.

American artists, in London or passing through, began to make their way to the studio. Otto Bacher records in 1883 Whistler's friendliness, the pictures in the studio, their dinners together. In 1885 Mr. John W. Alexander came, commissioned by the *Century* to make a drawing of him for a series of portraits. Whistler posed for a little while, though

unwillingly, and criticised the drawing so severely that Mr. Alexander tore it up. After that, he says, Whistler posed like a lamb. Mr. Harper Pennington has written for us his reminiscences of those years :

" . . . Whistler was more than kind to me. Through him came everything. He introduced me right and left, and called me ' pupil ' ; took me about to picture shows and pointed out the good and bad. I remember my astonishment the first occasion of his giving unstinted praise to modern work, on which he seldom lavished positives. It was at the Royal Academy before one of those interiors of Orchardson's. Well, he stood in front of the canvas, his hat almost on his nose, his ' tuft ' sticking straight out as it did when he would catch his nether lip between his teeth, and, presently, a long forefinger went out and circled round a bit of yellow drapery, ' It would have been nice to have painted that,' he said, as if he thought aloud.

" Another day we rushed to the National Gallery—' just to get the taste out of our mouths,' he said—after a couple of hours' wandering in the Royal Academy wilderness of Hardy Annual Horrors. Whistler went at once to almost *smell* the Canalettos, while I went across the Gallery, attracted by the *Marriage à la Mode*. It was my first sight of them. Up to that day I had supposed that what I was told and had read of Hogarth was the truth—the silly rubbish about his being *only* a caricaturist, so that when confronted with those marvels of technical quality, I fairly gasped for breath, and then hurried over to where Whistler had his nose against the largest Canaletto, seized his arm, and said hurriedly, ' Come over here.' ' What's the matter ? ' said he, turning round. ' Why ! Hogarth ! He was a great painter ! ' ' Sh —sh ! ' said he (pretending he was afraid that someone would overhear us). ' Sh—sh ! Yes, I *know* it, . . . *but don't you tell 'em !* ' Later, Hogarth was thoroughly discussed and his qualities pointed out with that incisive manner which one had to be familiar with to understand.

" Whistler was reasonable enough and preferred a joke to a battle any day. Often he came to me in the King's Road, breathing vengeance against this or that person, but when he went away it was *invariably* with a *fin sourire* and one of his little notes. His clairvoyance in the matter of two notes to Leighton was made manifest at my writing-table. The P.R.A. wrote a lame explanation to Whistler's first query as to why he had not been invited to the Academy *soirée*, as President of the

NOCTURNE IN BLUE AND GOLD
OLD BATTERSEA BRIDGE

OIL

In the National Gallery of British Art, Tate Gallery

(*See page 172*)

THE FALLING ROCKET
NOCTURNE IN BLACK AND GOLD
OIL
In the possession of Mrs. S. Untermeyer

(*See page* 170)

R.S.B.A., *ex-officio*, or as Whistler. He came into my room one morning early—before I, sluggard, was awake!—and read to me an outline of a note he meant to write, and then wrote it with grace of diction and dainty composition, and the pretty balanced Butterfly for signature. When that was done, he turned to me (I was dressing then) and said: 'Now, Har-r-rpur-r-r.' (He liked to burr those r's in 'down-east' fashion.) 'Now, Har-r-rpur-r-r, I know Leighton, he will *fumble* this. He will answer so-and-so' (describing the answer Leighton actually sent), 'and then I've got him!' He chuckled, wrote another note—the retort to Leighton's unwritten answer to Whistler's not yet posted first note—which he read to me. That retort was sent almost verbatim, only one slight change made necessary by a turn of phrase in Leighton's weak apology! That *was* 'Amazing.' His anger soon burnt out—the jest *would* come—and the whole thing boiled itself down in the *World*, or a line to 'Labby.'"

CHAPTER XXVII: THE STUDIO IN THE FULHAM ROAD. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FIVE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN.

In 1885 Whistler moved from Tite Street to 454 Fulham Road. A shabby gate opened on a shabby lane leading to studios, one of which was his. Here Lady Archibald Campbell's and M. Duret's portraits were finished. Whistler was living at the time with Maud in a little house close by, since pulled down, which he called the "Pink Palace," having painted it himself. He was again hard up, and M. Duret, coming to dinner, would buy a good part of it on the way down and arrive, his pockets bulging with bottles and fruit and cake. Before long Whistler left the "Pink Palace" for the Vale, Chelsea—"an amazing place, you might be in the heart of the country, and there, two steps away, is the King's Road." It was the first house on the right beyond the iron gates, now demolished. But the whole place has gone.

In the *Court and Society Review* (July 1, 1886) Mr. Malcolm C. Salaman described the Fulham Road studio and the work in progress:

"The whitewashed walls, the wooden rafters, which partly form

a loft for the stowing away of canvases, the vast space unencumbered by furniture, and the large table-palette, all give the appearance of the working place. . . . Mr. Whistler is not so feeble as to aim at theatrical effects in his costume. In the black clothes of ordinary wear, straight from the street, he stands at his easel. To those accustomed to studios the completeness of the arrangement . . . in accordance with the scheme of the picture that is in progress is striking, as striking indeed as the personality of the artist. His whole body seems instinct with energy and enthusiasm, his face lit up with flashes of quick and strong thought, as that of a man who sees with his brains as well as with his eyes. . . .

"A word, by the way, about Mr. Whistler's palette. As I saw it the other day, the colours were arranged almost with the appearance of a picture. In the centre was white and on one side were the various reds leading up to black, while on the other side were the yellows leading up to blue. . . .

"And now a few words about some of the pictures which the master had almost ready for exhibition: A full-length figure of a girl in out-door black dress, with a fur cape and a hat trimmed with flowers. She stands against a dark background, and she *lives* in her frame. A full-length portrait of Mr. Walter Sickert, a favourite pupil of Mr. Whistler's and one of his cleverest disciples. He is in evening dress, and stands against a dark wall. This is a picture that Velasquez himself would have delighted in. [It has vanished.] A full-length portrait of a man with a Spanish-looking head, painted in a manner that is surely of the greatest. [Perhaps the portrait of Chase or of Eldon; both have disappeared.] . . . A superb portrait of Mrs. Godwin will rank among Mr. Whistler's *chefs d'œuvre*. The lady stands in an ample red cloak over a black dress, against red draperies, and in her bonnet is a red plume. Her hands rest on her hips, and her attitude is singularly vivacious. This picture has been painted in artificial light, as has also another of a lady seated in a graceful attitude, with one hand leaning over the back of a chair, while the other holds a fan. She wears a white evening dress, and is seen against a light background. [A picture we cannot identify.] Besides these Mr. Whistler showed me sketches of various groups of several girls on the seashore . . . [*The Six Projects*] and a sketch of *Venus*,

lovely in colour and design, the nude figure standing close to the sea, with delicate gauze draperies lightly lifted by the breeze. The studio is full of canvases and pictures in more or less advanced stages, and on one of the walls hang a number of pastel studies of nude and partially draped female figures. A portrait-sketch in black chalk of Mr. Whistler by M. Rajon also hangs on the wall."

The *Further Proposition*, which was quoted by Mr. Salaman, can be read in *The Gentle Art*. It is Whistler's statement that a figure should keep well within the frame, and that flesh should be painted according to the light in which it is seen: the answer to the objection often made to his portraits because the "flesh was low in tone." A year later it was reprinted in the *Art Journal* (April 1887) by Mr. Walter Dowdeswell, whose article was the first appreciation of Whistler in an important English magazine. Whistler, knowing the value of what he wrote, meant that his writings should be preserved, and he gave to Mr. Dowdeswell for publication the reply which he had made twenty years earlier to Hamerton's criticism of the *Symphony in White, No. III.*, but which was not then printed because the *Saturday Review*, where the criticism appeared, did not publish correspondence. Mr. Dowdeswell, describing the studio, adds a few details omitted by Mr. Salaman: "The *soupçon* of yellow in the rugs and matting; a table covered with old Nankin china; a crowd of canvases at the further end, and, pinned upon the wall on the right, a number of exquisite little notes of colour, and drawings of figures from life, in pastels, on brown paper."

Mr. E. J. Horniman, who had a studio near by, tells us that he often saw on the roof of the omnibus stable, just behind it, pictures put out to dry.

Many who visited the studio were surprised to find Whistler working in white. He sometimes wore a white jacket; sometimes took off his coat and waistcoat. He was as fastidious with his work as with his dress. He could not endure a slovenly palette, or brushes and colours in disorder, though the palette had a raised edge to keep the colour off his sleeve. Unfortunately, after his wife's death he ruined the two portraits of himself in the white painting jacket, which he never exhibited, by changing the white jacket to a black coat.

Other reminiscences of Fulham Road we have from William M.

Chase, who came to London in 1885, with a suggestion that he and Whistler should paint each other; also, that Whistler should go back to America and open a school. "Well, you know, that anyway will be all right, Colonel," as Whistler called Chase. "Of course, everybody will receive me; tug-boats will come down the Bay; it will be perfect!" He thought so seriously of going, that he hesitated to send to the London galleries work he would want for America.

The two portraits were begun. Whistler painted a full-length of Chase, in frock-coat and top-hat, a cane held jauntily across his legs. As he wrote afterwards, in a letter included in *The Gentle Art*, "I, who was charming, made him beautiful on canvas, the Masher of the Avenues." Whistler was delighted with what he had done:

"Look at this, Colonel! Look at this; did you ever see anything finer?"

"It's meek or modest, they'll have to put on your tombstone!"

"Say 'and' not 'or'—meek and modest! H'm!—well, you know, splendid, Chase!"

Chase remembers an evening when they were to dine out, and Whistler had to go home to dress, and it was almost the hour before he ventured to remind him. Then Whistler was astonished:

"What, Chase, you can think of dinner and time when we are doing such beautiful things? Stay where you are, and they will be glad to see me whenever I come."

Everybody who has been with him in the studio knows how difficult it was for him to stop when he was absorbed in his work. Mr. Pennington says: "Whistler's habit of painting long after the hour when anybody could distinguish gradations of light and colour was the cause of much unnecessary repainting and many disappointments, for after leaving a canvas that seemed exquisite in the dusk of the falling night, he would return to it in the glare of the next morning and find unexpected effects that had been concealed by the twilight. Whistler never learned to hold his hand when daylight waned. The fascination of *seeming* to have caught the values led him far into the deceiving shades of night with often disastrous results."

Whistler's portrait of Chase has vanished with many another. Chase painted Whistler also in frock-coat, without a hat, holding the long cane, against a yellow wall, and his portrait remains. Chase

intended stopping a short time in London as he passed on to Madrid. But he found Whistler so delightful that his visit to Spain was put off. He has told many incidents of these months spent with Whistler in a lecture delivered in the United States, and in an article in the *Century*. A lecturer, no doubt, must adapt himself to his audience, and Chase has dwelt principally on Whistler, the man—Whistler, the dandy; Whistler, the fantastic, designing, for the tour in America, a white hansom with yellow reins and a white and yellow livery for the nigger driver; Whistler, the traveller. They went together to Belgium and Holland. They stopped at Antwerp and saw the International Exhibition. Whistler said to us once that he could never be ill-natured, only wicked, and this was one of the occasions when he was wicked. In the gallery he refused to look at any pictures except those that told stories, asking Chase if the mouse would really scare the cat or the baby swallow the mustard-pot. The first interest he showed was in the work of Alfred Stevens. Before it he stood long; at last, with his little finger pointing to a passage in the small canvas, "H'm, Colonel! you know one would not mind having painted that!' Chase grew nervous as they approached the wall devoted to Bastien-Lepage, whom he admired, and he decided to leave Whistler. But Whistler would not hear of it. "I'll say only one word, Chase," he promised. Then they came to the Bastiens, "H'm, h'm, Colonel, the one word—School!" On the journey from Antwerp to Amsterdam two Germans were in the train: "Well, you, know, Colonel, if the Almighty ever made a mistake it was when he created the German!" Whistler said at the end of a few minutes. Chase told him that if he could speak German he might understand their interesting talk. Whistler answered in fluent German and talked nothing else, until, at Haarlem, Chase could endure it no longer and left. Whistler leaned out of the window as the train started, "Think it over, Chase, and to-morrow morning you will come on to Amsterdam, and you'll tell me that I'm right about the Germans!"

One incident not told in print by Chase is that while in London he was the owner of the *Mother*. An American had given him money to buy pictures, and when he found that the *Mother* was to be had from Mr. Graves for one hundred pounds he bought it, but first was referred to Whistler by Mr. Graves. Whistler, delighted to learn

that he could control the pictures deposited with the Pall Mall firm, agreed to everything, but the agreement, was settled the day before starting for Antwerp, and when Chase got the money from his bankers and hurried to the Graves Gallery it was closed, and he gave the cheque to Whistler. The picture was his, but only during the time of Whistler's absence from London, for on his return Whistler could not bear to part with it and promptly sent the cheque back to Chase—or it may be that the trip with Chase helped him to change his mind.

All this is characteristic, but it would be interesting to hear less of his play and more of his work from Chase, who gives only a glimpse of Whistler the artist, and then in lighter moods. He tells of one occasion when an American wanted to buy some etchings, and they were to lunch with him in the City to arrange the matter. Taking a hansom, late of course, they passed a grocer's where Whistler stopped the driver: "Well, Chase, what do you think? If I get him to move the box of oranges? What?" And then, still later, they drove on. Another time, Chase expressed surprise at Whistler's refusing to deliver a picture to the lady who had bought it. But Whistler explained:

"You know, Chase, the people don't really want anything beautiful. They fill a room by chance with beautiful things, and some little trumpery something over the mantelpiece gives the whole damned show away. And if they pay a hundred pounds or so for a picture, they think it belongs to them. Well—why—it should only be theirs for a while; hung on their walls that they may rejoice in it and then returned." Once, it is said, a lady drove up to the studio and told him: "I have bought one of your pictures, it is beautiful, but as it is always at exhibitions I never see it. But I'm told you have it." "Dear lady," said Whistler, "you have been misinformed, it is not here." And she drove away. Later he found it: "H'm, she was right about one thing, it is beautiful. But because she's paid hundreds of pounds for it, she thinks she ought to have it all the time. She's lucky if she gets it now and then."

It must be admitted that it is not easy from any standpoint to write of Whistler during the years that followed his return from Venice. The decade between 1880 and 1890 is the fullest of his full life. It was during these ten years that he opened his "one man" shows amidst jeers, and closed them with success. It was during

these ten years that he conquered society, though society never realised it. It was during these ten years that, to make himself known, he became in the streets of London the observed of all observers, developing extraordinary costumes, attracting to himself the attention he wanted to attract. It was during these ten years that he began to wrap himself in mystery, as Degas said of him, and then go off and get photographed, when, as Degas also said, he acted as if he had no genius: but mystery and pose were part of the armour he put on to protect himself from, and draw to himself, a foolish public. It was during these ten years that he invented the Followers—and got rid of them; that he flitted from house to house, from studio to studio, and through England, France, Belgium, and Holland, until it is impossible to keep pace with him; that he captured the Press, though it is still unconscious of its capture; that he concentrated the interest of England, of the whole world upon him, with one object in view—that is, to make England, the whole world, look at his work. For, as he said, if he had not made people look at it they never would have done so. They never understood it, they hated it. They do not understand it to-day, and they hate it the more because he has succeeded and they have failed in their endeavours to ignore or ruin him. Even now that it is too late, they are crawling from their graves and spitting at him, flinging mud at his memory.

In these crowded years two events stand out with special prominence, his *Ten O'Clock* and his invasion of the British Artists. One states definitely his views on art; the other shows as definitely the position he had attained among artists.

CHAPTER XXVIII: THE TEN O'CLOCK. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT.

Into *The Ten O'Clock* Whistler put all he had learned of art, all he knew to be unchangeable and everlasting. Mr. W. C. Alexander has told us that when he listened to *The Ten O'Clock* at Prince's Hall, nothing in it was new to him; he had heard it for years from Whistler over the dinner-table. The only new thing was Whistler's determination to say in public what he had said in private. He was busy

with this in the autumn and winter of 1884–85. He would come at strange hours and read a page to Mr. Cole, in whose diary, from October until February, note follows note of his visits :

" *October* 24 (1884). Whistler to dine. We passed the evening writing out his views on Ruskin, art, etc.

" *October* 27. Jimmy to dinner, continuing notes as to himself and art.

" *October* 28. Writing out Whistler's notes for him.

" *October* 29. Jimmy to dine. Writing notes as to his opinions on art matters, and discussing whether to offer them for publication to *English Illustrated Magazine* edited by Comyns Carr, or to whom ? "

Mr. G. A. Holmes, in his Chelsea house, was often roused by the sharp ring and double-knock, followed by Whistler with a page or paragraph for his approval. Mr. Menpes writes that " scores of times—I might almost say hundreds of times—he paced up and down the Embankment at night, repeating to me sentences from the marvellous lecture." A marvellous story. During a few days' illness at his brother's in Wimpole Street, where, when ill, he went, Mrs. Whistler recalled him sitting, propped up by pillows, reading passages to the doctor and herself.

His plan for an article in the *English Illustrated Magazine* came to nothing. In November 1884 Lord Powerscourt, Mr. Ludovici says in the *Art Journal* (July 1906), invited Whistler to Ireland to distribute prizes at an art school and speak to the students, and nothing was more appropriate than the notes he had written down.

Mr. Cole records :

" *November* 19 (1884). Whistler called and told us how he was invited to Ireland, where he was sending some of his works, and would lecture in Dublin."

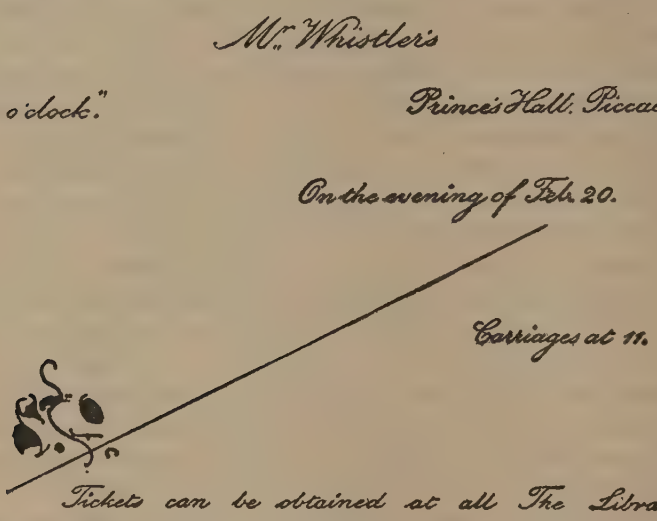
The invitation came from the Dublin Sketching Club, which held its exhibitions in Leinster Hall. Three other Americans—Sargent, Julian Story, and Ralph Curtis—were invited. No such collection of Whistler's work had been seen out of London. Mr. Booth Pearsall, the honorary secretary, sends us this account :

" He was exceedingly generous to a club of strangers, lending them twenty-five of his works. This collection included the *Mother*, *Lady Meux*, *Carlyle*, a number of Nocturnes, and other oils, water-colours,

and pastels. The pictures had to be hung together in a group. As I was so interested in them, with Mr. Whistler's permission, I had them photographed. He never asked for rights or commission, but, in the most gracious, generous way, gave us the permission to use the negatives as we liked. The exhibition was hardly opened before the critical music began, and in the papers and in conversation, a regular tempest arose that was highly diverting to Mr. Whistler. He begged me to send him everything said about the exhibition, and his letters show he quite enjoyed all the ferment. The whole of Dublin was convulsed, and many went to Molesworth Street to see the exhibition who rarely went to see anything of the kind. Then a terrible convulsion took place in the club : a group of members we had admitted, who photographed, got together, and drew up resolutions, that never again should such pictures be exhibited. None of these men could even paint. The talent of the club replied by having Mr. Whistler elected as hon. member, and it was carried, despite intense resistance. I took an active part in all this. It was with a view to helping Mr. Whistler that I did my best to have his *Ten O'Clock* given in Dublin. He was at first disposed to come over, but other matters prevented, and the matter dropped. During the time of the exhibition, I tried my utmost to sell the pictures, and an offer was made by a friend to purchase the *Mother* and the *Carlyle*, which seemed to promise well, but ultimately stopped. I did induce the friend to purchase *Piccadilly*, which had been No. 9, *Nocturne in Grey and Gold—Piccadilly* (water-colour), in his exhibition in Bond Street that May [Dowdeswell's]. He was very much pleased indeed, and sent the Right Hon. Jonathan Hogg, P.C., a receipt, greatly to Mr. Hogg's amusement, for an impression was rife that he never did attend to business. I know from friends, who knew Mr. Whistler, how much pleased he was, not only with the purchase of his pictures, but with the commotion that the exhibition caused."

Whistler did not give up the idea of a lecture. Archibald Forbes heard him read, was impressed, and introduced him to Mrs. D'Oyly Carte. She had managed a lecture tour for Forbes, now she agreed to arrange an evening for Whistler. She told us of his attention to detail. "The idea was absolutely his," she wrote us, "and all I did was to see to the business arrangements. You can imagine how

enthusiastic he was over it all, and how he made one enthusiastic too." She was about to produce *The Mikado*, and, sure that he would find her in her office at the Savoy Theatre, he would appear there every evening to talk things over, or would send Mr. Walter Sickert with a message. Whistler delighted in her office, a tiny room lit by a lamp on her desk, making strange effects, but his only records of his many visits are in the etchings, *Savoy Scaffolding* and *Miss Lenoir*, Mrs. D'Oyly Carte's name before her marriage. Prince's Hall was taken.


Mr. Whistler's
"Ten o'clock."
Princes Hall. Piccadilly.
On the evening of Feb. 20.
Carriages at 11.
Tickets can be obtained at all The Libraries.

Whistler suggested the hour. People were not to rush to him from dinner as to the theatre ; therefore ten was as early as one could expect them, and the hour gave the name—*The Ten O'Clock*. He designed the ticket, he had it enlarged into a poster, he chose the offices where tickets should be sold. There was a rehearsal at Prince's Hall on February 19 (1885), Mrs. D'Oyly Carte and some of the Followers sitting in front to tell him if his voice carried. Whistler had his lecture by heart, his delivery was excellent, he needed no coaching, only an occasional warning to raise his voice. It was because he feared his voice would not carry that he gave his nightly rehearsals on the Embankment, Mr. Menpes says.

On February 20, 1885, the hall was crowded. Reporters expressed

the general feeling when they wondered whether "the eccentric artist was going to sketch, to pose, to sing, or to rhapsodise," and were frankly astonished when the "amiable eccentric" chose to appear simply as "a jaunty, unabashed, composed, and self-satisfied gentleman, armed with an opera hat and an eyeglass." Others were amazed to see him "attired in faultless evening dress." The Followers compared the figure in black against the black background to the *Sarasate*, and they recall his hat carefully placed on the table and the long cane as carefully stood against the wall. Oscar Wilde called him "a miniature Mephistopheles mocking the majority." The unprejudiced saw the dignity of his presence and felt the truth and beauty of his words. Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt writes us:

"It is always a delight to remember that actually once Mr. Whistler was really shy. Those who had the pleasure of hearing the first *Ten O'Clock* remember that when he came before his puzzled and distinguished audience there were a few minutes of very palpable stage-fright."

He had notes, but he seldom referred to them. He held his audience from the first, and Mrs. D'Oyly Carte recalled the hush in the hall when he came to his description of London transfigured, a fairyland in the night. "I went to laugh and I stayed to praise," is the late Lewis F. Day's account to us, and others were generous enough to make the same admission. Whistler forced his audience to listen because he spoke with conviction. *The Ten O'Clock* was the statement of truths which his contemporaries were doing their best to forget. When we read it to-day, our surprise is that things so obvious needed saying. Yet the need exists to-day more than ever. Almost every one of Whistler's propositions and statements has been traduced or ignored by critics, who are incapable of leading thought or are dealers in disguise, and painters compare their puny selves and petty financial scrapes to Whistler's magnificent efforts and complete success in his battles for art and his reputation.

To this lecture we owe the most interesting profession of artistic faith ever made by an artist. At the time it was given there was a reaction, outside the Academy, against the anecdote and sentiment of Victorian art. Ruskin through his books, the Pre-Raphaelites through their pictures, had spread the doctrine that art was a question

of ethics and industry. Pater preached that it belonged to the past, William Morris taught that it sprang from the people and to the people must return. Strange, sad-coloured creatures clad themselves in strange, sad-coloured garments and admired each other. Many besides Oscar Wilde profitably peddled in the provinces what they prigged or picked up; artists proclaimed the political importance of art; parsons discovered in it a new salvation. "Art was upon the town," as Whistler said. But ethics and business, fashion and socialism had captured it. *The Ten O'Clock* was a protest against the crimes committed in the name of art, against the belief that art belonged to the past or concerned the people, that its object was to teach or to elevate. "Art and Joy go together," he said, the world's masters were never reformers, never missionaries, but, content with their surroundings, found beauty everywhere. There was no great past, no mean present, for art, no drawing of lines between the marbles of the Greek and the fans and broideries of Japan. There was no artistic period, no art-loving people. Art happened, and, in a few eloquent words, he told the history of its happening and the coming of the cheap and tawdry, when the taste of the tradesman supplanted the science of the artist, and the multitude rejoiced. Art is a science—the science by which the artist picks and chooses and groups the elements contained in Nature, that beauty may result. For "Nature is very rarely right, to such an extent even, that it might almost be said that Nature is usually wrong." He has been so frequently misunderstood that it may be well to emphasise the meaning of these two assertions, the rock upon which his faith was founded. Art happens because the artist may happen anywhere at any time; art is a science not because painters maintain that it is concerned with laws of light or chemistry of colours or scientific problems, but because it is exact in its methods and in its results. The artist can leave no more to chance than the chemist or the botanist or the biologist. Knowledge may and does increase and develop, but the laws of art are unalterable. Because art is a science the critic who is not an artist speaks without authority and would prize a picture as a "hieroglyph or symbol of story," or for anything save the painter's poetry which is the reason for its existence, "the amazing invention that shall have put form and colour into such perfect harmony, that exquisiteness is the result." The conditions of art

THE BRIDGE

ETCHING. G. 204

By permission of Messrs. Dowdeswell

(*See page* 199)

THE DOORWAY

ETCHING. G. 188

By permission of the Fine Art Society

(*See page* 192)

are degraded by these "middlemen," the critics, and by the foolish who would go back because the thumb of the mountebank jerked the other way. He laughed at the pretence of the State as fosterer of art—art that roams as she will, from the builders of the Parthenon to the opium-eaters of Nankin, from the Master at Madrid to Hokusai at the foot of Fusiyama. His denial of an artistic period or an art-loving people was his defence of art against those who would bound it by dates and confine it within topographical limits. He meant, not that a certain period might not produce artists and people to appreciate them, but that art is independent of time and place, "seeking and finding the beautiful in all conditions and in all times, as did her high priest, Rembrandt, when he saw picturesque grandeur and noble dignity in the Jews' quarter of Amsterdam, and lamented not that its inhabitants were not Greeks.

"As did Tintoret and Paul Veronese, among the Venetians, while not halting to change the brocaded silks for the classic draperies of Athens.

"As did, at the Court of Philip, Velasquez, whose Infantas, clad in inæsthetic hoops, are, as works of Art, of the same quality as the Elgin Marbles."

As did, he might have added, Whistler, during the reign of Victoria, in his portraits and Nocturnes which have carried on the art of the world.

His argument was clear and his facts, misunderstood, are becoming the *clichés* of this generation. Critics, photographers, even Royal Academicians have appropriated the truths of *The Ten O'Clock*, for strange things are happening to the memory of the Idle Apprentice. He made his points wittily; he chose his words and rounded his sentences with the feeling for the beautiful that ruled his painting. *The Ten O'Clock* has passed into literature. Those Sunday wrestlings with Scripture in Lowell, that getting of the Psalms by heart at Stonington developed a style the literary artist may envy. This style in *Art and Art Critics* had its roughness. He pruned and chastened it in his letters to the papers, devoting infinite thought and trouble to them, for he, more than most men, believed that whatever he had to do was worth doing with all his might. He would write and rewrite them, and drive editors mad by coming at the busiest hour to correct the proof, working over it an hour or more, and then returning to change a word or a comma, while press and printers waited, and he

got so excited once he forgot his eyeglass—and the editor stole it, and, of course, later lost it. In his correspondence he was as scrupulous, and we have known him make a rough draft of a letter to his bootmaker in Paris, and ask us to dictate it to him while he wrote his fair copy, as a final touch addressing it to M. ——, *Maître Bottier*. In *The Ten O'Clock* he brought his style to perfection. His philosophy, based on the eternal truths of art, was expressed with the beauty that endures for all time.

The critics treated Whistler's lecture as they treated his exhibitions. The *Daily News* was almost alone in owning that its quality was a surprise. The *Times* had the country with it when it said that "the audience, hoping for an hour's amusement from the eccentric genius of the artist, were not disappointed." "The eccentric freak of an amiable, humorous, and accomplished gentleman," was the *Daily Telegraph's* opinion. Oscar Wilde, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was shocked that an artist should talk of art, and was unwilling to accept the fact that only a painter is a judge of painting. This was natural, for as an authority on art Wilde had made himself ridiculous. Nor could he assent to much that Whistler said, for, as a lecturer, he had been a perambulating advertisement for the æsthetic movement, against which *The Ten O'Clock* was a protest. But he was more generous than other critics in acknowledging the beauty of the lecture and the earnestness of the lecturer, though he could not finish his notice without one parting shot at the man whose target he had often been: "that he is indeed one of the very greatest masters of painting is my opinion. And I may add that, in this opinion, Mr. Whistler himself entirely concurs." This was not the sort of thing Whistler could pass over. His answer led to a correspondence which made another chapter in *The Gentle Art*.

Whistler repeated *The Ten O'Clock* several times; early in March before the British Artists, and later in the same month (the 24th) before the University Art Society at Cambridge, where he spent the night with Sir Sidney Colvin, who writes us, "beyond the mere fact that Whistler dined with me in Hall and had some chat there with Prince Edward—an amiable youth who was a little scared at the idea of having to talk art (of which he was blankly ignorant) but whom Whistler soon put at his ease; I have no precise recollection of what passed." What a pity!

On April 30 he gave his lecture at Oxford. Mr. Sidney Starr "went down with Whistler and his brother, 'Doctor Willie,' to the Mitre. The lecture hall was small, with primitive benches, and the audience was small. The lecture was delivered impressively, but lacking the original emphasis and sparkle. Whistler hated to do anything twice over, and this was the fourth time."

The fifth time was about the same date, at the Royal Academy Students' Club in Golden Square, an unexplained accident, and the sixth at the Fine Art Society's. Dr. Moncure Conway wrote us a year before his death that he heard *The Ten O'Clock* at Lady Jeune's, but Lady Jeune does not recollect it. Whistler we are sure would have remembered and recorded it. There was a suggestion, which came to nothing, of taking it on an American tour and to Paris. It was heard twice more in London, once at the Grosvenor Gallery in February 1888. Val Prinsep recalled Whistler's "pressing invitation" for him and Leighton to attend:

"During the time he was president of the British Artists, he and the other heads of art sometimes were asked to dine by our President (Leighton). 'Rather late to ask *me*, don't you think?' Whistler remarked. After dinner, he pressed Leighton and me to come to his lecture, which was to be delivered a few days after. 'What's the use of me coming?' Leighton said sadly. 'You know I should not agree with what you said, my dear Whistler!' 'Oh,' cried Whistler, 'come all the same; nobody takes me seriously, don't you know!'"

It was heard for the last time three years later (1891) at the Chelsea Arts Club, which had just started and proposed to hold lectures and discussions; it now gives fancy-dress balls and boxing matches. Before the club found a home it was suggested that the first of these meetings should be at the Cadogan Pier Hotel, and Whistler was invited to read *The Ten O'Clock*, but his answer was, "No, gentlemen, let us go to no beer hotel," and *The Ten O'Clock* was put off until the club-house in the King's Road was opened.

The Ten O'Clock, originally set up by Mr. Way, was published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus in the spring of 1888. It had much the same reception when it was printed as when it was delivered. The only criticism Whistler took seriously was an article by Swinburne in the *Fortnightly Review* for June 1888.

Swinburne objected to Whistler's praise of Japanese art, to his rigid line between art and literature, to his incursion as "brilliant amateur" into the region of letters, to his denial of the possibility of an artistic period or an art-loving people, and to much else besides. All this might have passed, but Swinburne went further. He questioned the seriousness of Whistler. He twisted Whistler's meaning to suit his weighty humour, and then, in a surprising vein of insolence, re-echoed the popular verdict. The witty tongue must be thrust into the smiling cheek, he thought, when Whistler wrote, "Art and Joy go together," which meant, according to Swinburne, that tragic art is not art at all.

"'Arter that, let's have a glass of wine,' said a famous countryman of Mr. Whistler's, on the memorable occasion when he was impelled to address his friend Mr. Brick in the immortal words, 'keep cool, Jefferson, don't bust.' The admonition may not improbably be required by the majority of readers who come suddenly and unawares upon this transcendent and pyramidal pleasantry. The laughing muse of the lecturer, '*quam Jocus circumvolat*,' must have glanced round in expectation of the general appeal, 'After that, let us take breath.' And having done so, they must have remembered that they were not in a serious world; that they were in the fairyland of fans, in the paradise of pipkins, in the limbo of blue china, screens, pots, plates, jars, joss-houses, and all the fortuitous frippery of Fusiyama."

This is quoted as an example of Swinburnian humour. The rest of the article is offensive and ridiculous — the brilliant poet but ponderous prose writer trying to be funny—with references to the "jester of genius," to the "tumbler or clown," to the "gospel of the grin." It was this that hurt—that Swinburne, the poet, "also misunderstood," could laugh with the crowd at the "eccentricity" and levity of Whistler. Swinburne's criticism was easy to answer, and was answered in two of the comments printed, with extracts from the article, in *The Gentle Art*. "That tragic art is not art at all" is, Whistler wrote, Swinburne's "own inconsequence," and this *Reflection* appears on the opposite margin:

"Is not, then, the funeral hymn a gladness to the singer, if the verse be beautiful?

"Certainly the funeral monument, to be worthy the Nation's

sorrow buried beneath it, must first be a joy to the sculptor who designed it.

"The Bard's reasoning is of the People. The Tragedy is *theirs*. As one of them the *man* may weep—yet will the artist rejoice, for to him is not 'a thing of beauty a joy for ever'?"

To the *World* Whistler wrote the letter called "Freeing a Last Friend" in *The Gentle Art*. It is short, the sting in the concluding paragraph:

"Thank you, my dear! I have lost a *confrère*; but then, I have gained an acquaintance—one Algernon Swinburne—'outsider'—Putney."

The letter was sent to Swinburne before it appeared in the *World*. We have been told that it was received at Putney one Sunday morning when Mr. Watts-Dunton was to breakfast with Whistler. Suspecting that the letter might not be friendly, Mr. Watts-Dunton took it, unopened, with him to Chelsea and begged Whistler to withdraw it. Whistler refused. Mr. Watts-Dunton left the house without breakfasting, and the same day the letter was delivered to Swinburne, who, after reading it, pale with rage, swore that never again would he speak to Whistler. As a result, Mr. Watts-Dunton, we believe, was at pains to avoid Whistler, fearful of a rupture with him. Mr. Meredith had discovered years before that the springs in Whistler were prompt for the challenge, and it cannot be denied that he had reason to see a challenge in Swinburne's article. How much it hurt he did not conceal in *The Gentle Art*, where the extracts from Swinburne are followed immediately by *Et tu, Brute*, and there is nothing more dignified, almost pathetic, in the volume:

". . . Cannot the man who wrote *Atalanta*, and the *Ballads Beautiful*—can he not be content to spend his life with *his* work, which should be his love, and has for him no misleading doubt and darkness, that he should so stray about blindly in his brother's flower beds and bruise himself! . . .

"Who are you deserting your Muse, that you should insult my Goddess with familiarity, and the manners of approach common to the reasoners in the market-place? 'Hearken to me,' you cry, 'and I will point out how this man, who has passed his life in her worship, is a tumbler and a clown of the booths, how he who has

produced that which I fain must acknowledge, is a jester in the ring!'

"Do we not speak the same language? Are we strangers, then, or, in our Father's house are there so many mansions that you lose your way, my brother, and cannot recognise your kin? . . .

"You have been misled, you have mistaken the pale demeanour and joined hands for an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual earnestness. For you, these are the serious ones, and, for them, you others are the serious matter. Their joke is their work. For me—why should I refuse myself the grim joy of this grotesque tragedy—and, with them now, you are all my joke!"

And Swinburne, in pitiful spite, we have been told, burned Whistler's letters, and tried to sell *La Mère Gérard* which Whistler had given him. Later, Mr. Watts-Dunton is said to have stated that Whistler asked Swinburne to write the article, and also that he tried to make peace between them.

CHAPTER XXIX: THE BRITISH ARTISTS. THE RISE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SIX.

In the autumn of 1884, Whistler joined the Society of British Artists. Years later, when a British Artist was dining with us, Whistler came in. "A delightful evening," he said, towards midnight, the British Artist having gone, "but what was it for the British Artist sitting there, face to face with his late President?" And then, he told us how he became connected with the Society:

"Well, you know, one day at my studio in Chelsea, a deputation arrived—Ayerst Ingram and one or two others. And there they were—and I received them charmingly, of course—and they represented to me that the British Artists' was an old and distinguished Society, possibly as old as the Academy, and maybe older, and they had come to ask me if I would do them the honour of becoming a member. It was only right I should know that the Society's fortunes were at a low ebb, but they wished to put new life into it. I felt the ceremony of the occasion. Whatever the Society was at the moment, it had a past, and they were

there with all official authority to pay me a compliment. I accepted the offer with appropriate courtesy. As always, I understood the ceremonial of the occasion—and then, almost as soon as I was made a member I was elected President."

In the summer of 1906 Sir Alfred East, President of the British Artists, and the Council, with the courtesy Whistler would have approved, gave us permission to consult the minute-books. The first mention of Whistler is in the minutes of the half-yearly general meeting, November 21, 1884, held at the Suffolk Street Galleries, when it was proposed " that Mr. Whistler be invited to join the Society as a member. A discussion took place concerning the law of electing Mr. Whistler by ballot, when it was proposed by Mr. Bayliss, seconded by Mr. Cauty, that the law relating to the election of members be suspended." This was carried, and the *Times* (December 3, 1884) said: " Artistic society was startled by the news that this most wayward, most un-English of painters had found a home among the men of Suffolk Street, of all people in the world."

Whistler had never belonged to any society in England, and had never been asked, though we believe he was a Freemason; at any rate he had a pair of sleeve buttons with masonic emblems—apparently—on them. He was fifty, an age when most men have " arrived " officially, if they " arrive " at all. Up to this moment he had stood apart from every school and group and movement in the country. He was as much a foreigner as when he came, a quarter of a century before, from Paris. He was a puzzle to the people, more American than English in appearance, manners, and standards. His short, slight figure, dark colouring and abundant curls, his vivacity of gesture, his American accent, his gaiety, his sense of honour, his quick resentment of an insult, were foreign and, therefore, to be suspected, and his personality increased the suspicion with which his art was regarded. Recent writers have analysed his work and pointed out where it is American, French, Japanese. But to his contemporaries it did not matter what these tendencies were, the result was not English. His art, in its aims and methods, was different from theirs, to them he seemed in deliberate opposition, ruled by caprice, straining after novelty and notoriety.

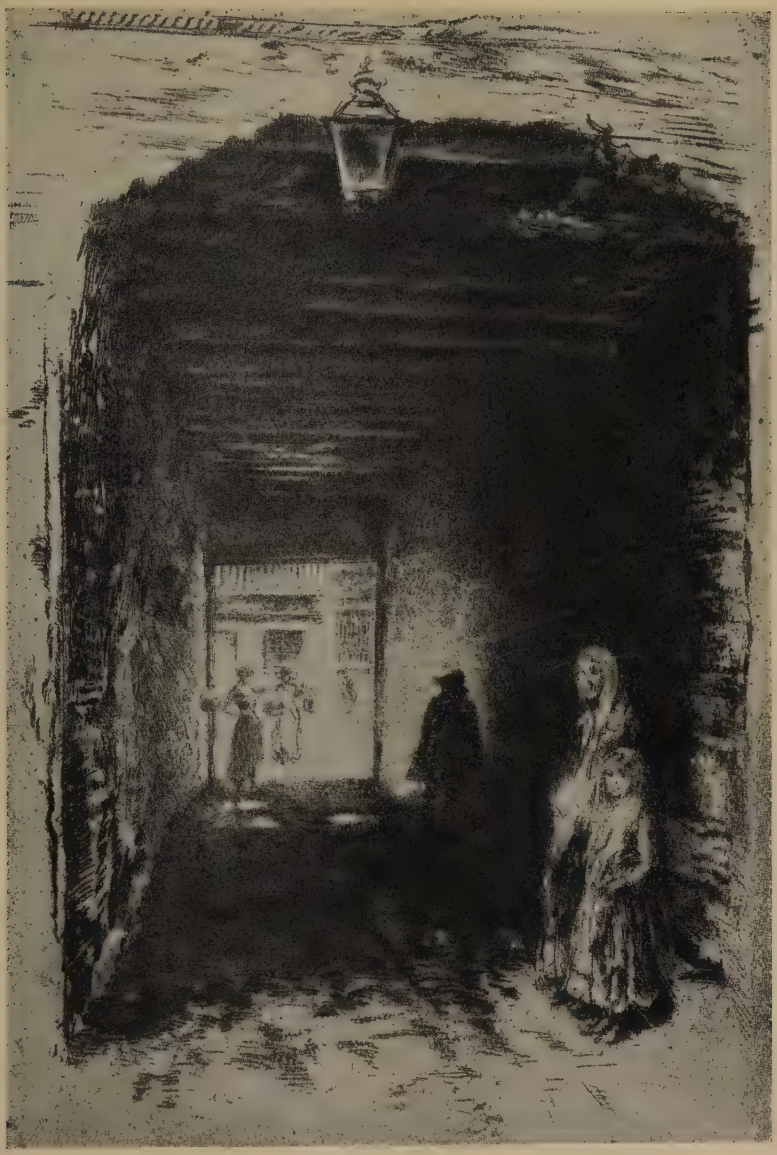
When Whistler came to England, art was the Academy, an Academy

that had strangled the traditions of art and set up sentiment and anecdote. Wilkie explained the ideal of the nineteenth-century Academician when he said that " to know the taste of the public—to learn what will best please the employer—is, to an artist, the most valuable of all knowledge " ; and the Royal Academy has only carried on the canny tradition. The classic machines of Leighton, Tadema, and Poynter appealed to the artless scholar ; the idylls of Millais, Marcus Stone, and Leslie to the artless sentimentalist. Watts preached sermons for the artless serious, Stacy Marks raised a laugh in the artless humorist, Herbert and Long edified the artless pious. Every taste was catered to. Everybody could understand, and art had never been so popular in England. The Academy became a social power. As art was the last thing looked for on the walls, so the artist was the last thing looked for in the Academician. The situation is summed up in Whistler's reply to a group of ladies who were praising Leighton :

" He is such a wonderful musician ! such a gallant colonel ! such a brilliant orator ! such a dignified President ! such a charming host ! such an amazing linguist ! " they chorused. " H'm, paints, too, don't he, among his other accomplishments ? " said Whistler.

It was an extraordinary state of affairs. " Art," was little more than an excuse for intrigues and trivialities. Men who were thought daring in rebellion and leaders of secessions did not improve matters. The Pre-Raphaelites were absorbed in subject, though it was of another kind, and though they paid greater attention to technique and preached, as reformers always have, a return to Nature. Their insistence upon detail and finish, instead of opening their eyes, closed them more hopelessly by making it a duty to see nothing save unimportant facts, and to copy these like a machine. The exception, Alfred Stevens, who neither stooped to the taste of public or patron, nor confused the artist with the missionary, was as complete a pariah as Whistler, and he died unknown and unrecognised.

The position in France was different. French officialism respected tradition. The art of the academic painters might be frigid, conventional, dull, but it was never petty and trivial, never strove to please by escape from drawing and colour. Gleyre, Ary Scheffer, Couture were the masters Whistler found in Paris. Their successors—Gérôme,



THE BEGGARS

ETCHING. G. 194

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(*See page* 199)

THE RIALTO

ETCHING. G. 211

By permission of Messrs. Dowdeswell

(*See page* 199)

Jean-Paul Laurens, Bouguereau, Bonnat—did not altogether throw their dignity as artists to the winds of popularity, or sacrifice it to social ambition. The rebels in France were not actuated by moral or literary motives, but broke away from conservatism. Rebellion sent Holman Hunt to Palestine, Rossetti to mediævalism, Burne-Jones to legend; it kept Courbet at home, for the true was the beautiful and truth was to be found in the life and the people about him. Moreover, the painter was to see these things through, not a microscope, but his eyes. No man who looks upon a broad landscape can count the blades of grass in a field, or the leaves of ivy on a wall, or the stars in the heavens; the eye can take in only the whole, enveloped in atmosphere, bathed in light, shrouded in darkness, all things keeping their places in their planes. While in England the artist was searching the Scriptures and the Encyclopædia for subject, in France he was training his eye to see things as they are and his hand to render them. This preoccupation with Nature, and the study of tone, gave artists new pictorial and technical problems, and subject counted for nothing except as an aid to their right solution. It is curious to contrast the work of the men in France and England of the same generation as Whistler. Fantin-Latour grouped his friends about the portrait of Delacroix, Leighton rearranged a procession of early Florentines carrying the Madonna of Cimabue through his idea of the streets. Manet noted the play of light and colour in the bull-rings of Spain, Tadema rebuilt on his canvas what he thought were the arenas of ancient Rome. Degas chose his models among the washerwomen and ballet-girls of modern Paris, Rossetti borrowing his subjects from Dante.

Whistler, from his first picture, was as preoccupied with the beauty in the "familiar" as his French fellow students. What might have happened had he remained in France, it is idle to discuss. Coming to England he developed in his own way, and this was a way with which English painters had no sympathy. He was so isolated that nothing has been more difficult for the historian of modern art than to place, to classify him. Some authorities have included him among the Realists. His work eventually differed from that of Courbet and Courbet's disciples, but he was always as much a realist as they in his preference for the world in which he lived, and in his study of the relations of the things he found in it. He never wavered, except when

he painted the Japanese pictures, and then he was not led astray by anecdote or sentiment, but by the beauty that had drifted from Japan into his house and studio. London, dirty, gloomy, despised by most artists, with its little shops and taverns in the fog-bound streets; the Thames, with its ugly warehouses and gaunt factories in the mist-laden night; the crinolines of the sixties; the clinging, tight draperies of the seventies, became beautiful as he saw them. He made no effort to reform Nature, only reserving his right to select the elements that were beautiful and could be brought together, as notes in music, to create harmony, putting into practice his teaching of *The Ten O'Clock*. He sought colour, mass, not detail. The Pre-Raphaelites wanted to leave out less than a camera, he wanted to put in no more than came within his vision. He turned his back on history and archæology, and filled his canvas with beauty of line and form. And he struggled to perfect his technical methods, to make of them a perfect medium by which to express this beauty, to reconcile what he could see in Nature with what his brush could render. The Pre-Raphaelites laboured over their canvas, inch by inch; he painted his whole picture at once that unity might result. The Academicians lost their way in literary labyrinths; he lingered on the river, learning its secrets, he watched the movement, the pose of people about him. The modern exhibition forced most painters into violent colour and exaggerated action, he made no concession, though he was ready to submit his pictures to the same tests as theirs.

It was inevitable that his English contemporaries could make nothing of him and his work. The Academician saw but emptiness in his paintings. To the Pre-Raphaelites they were slovenly and superficial. Holman Hunt said of him that he knew where to leave off, and was careful in the avoidance of difficulties; Millais thought him "a great power of mischief among young men, a man who had never learnt the grammar of his art." The critics took their cue from the painters, the more willingly because art criticism then meant analysis of the subject of a picture, and there was no subject in Whistler's work to analyse. Yet he never objected to subject. It was only the blind critics and the blind painters of the day who said he did, and their stupidity is still aped. The great pictures for him were Velasquez's *Meniñas*, Franz Hals' *Family*, Tintoretto's *Milky Way*: the greatest subject-

pictures in the world. All he objected to was the cheap drivel or sentiment of the painter whose mind or whose audience never rose above Mummie's Darling or the Mustard Pot, the real British school trampled on by Hogarth. The public, following their leaders, were convinced that Whistler's work was empty, slight, trivial, an insult to their intelligence, unless they took it as a jest. Nothing explains the popular conception of him better than the readiness to see eccentricity even in methods which he, "heir to all the ages," had inherited. His long-handled brushes and his manner of placing sitter and canvas were eccentric, though they had been Gainsborough's a century before. To say that a picture was finished from the beginning was no less eccentric, though it was Baudelaire's axiom that the author foresees the last line of his work when he writes the first. It is easier to make than to lose the reputation for eccentricity, fatal to success in a land of conservatism. Whistler saw the Englishmen who had studied in Paris with him laden with honours; Poynter a prosperous painter, Leighton a perfect President, Du Maurier the popular idol of *Punch*, Armstrong a State functionary at South Kensington, while he remained, officially, on the outside, at fifty less honoured than at twenty-five, because, it was said, that he had not realised the promise of his youth.

In one respect his position had changed. His contemporaries did not alter their opinion, but younger artists accepted him and his teaching unquestioningly for a time. Though doubted and mistrusted, he had never been without influence. To look over old reviews and notices of exhibitions is to find references to the effect of his example. In the *Art Journal* (June 1887), Sir Walter Armstrong traced the growing influence of French on English art to the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867 and to Whistler. But artists of the new generation went further than the admission of his influence; with the enthusiasm of youth, they proclaimed his greatness. He was their master—the one master in England. After his return from Venice, when his fortunes were at their lowest and the public held him in most contempt, this enthusiasm began to make itself heard and felt in the studios and the schools.

The British Artists, uncertain of their future, took desperate remedies. The Society was old, with distinguished chapters in its history. It was formed by one of the first groups who realised the

necessity for an association in self-defence against the monopoly of the Academy. It dated back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. With the old Water Colour Society, it was considered only second in rank to the Academy. Its gallery was in Suffolk Street, near enough to the Academy to profit by any overflow of visitors, until the Academy moved from Trafalgar Square to Piccadilly. The old Water Colour Society was more independent, because it is devoted to a branch of art never acknowledged by the Academy, though every Academician tries to sneak in. But the British Artists suffered from this removal, and found a formidable rival in the Grosvenor Gallery. In Whistler, with his following, they seemed to see the man to drag them from the mire into which they had sunk. The older members hesitated—afraid of Whistler, afraid of the Academy, afraid of themselves. But the younger members carried the day.

Whistler worked hard for the Society from his election till his resignation. He attended his first meeting on December 1, 1884, and interested himself immediately in the affairs of the Society, though, according to Mr. Ludovici, this was the last thing the Society expected of him. He promptly invited his President and fellow members to breakfast in Tite Street, and, as promptly, was put on a committee for a smoking concert, a dull and ponderous function. He sent to the Winter Exhibition (1884–85) two pictures, *Arrangement in Black, No. II.*, the portrait of Mrs. Louis Huth, not exhibited in London since 1874, and a water-colour, *A Little Red Note, Dordrecht*; in the Summer Exhibition (1885) he showed the *Sarasate* for the first time. Mr. Cole wrote in his diary:

"*October 19th* (1884). M. and I went to tea with Whistler to see his fine full-length of Sarasate, the violinist, for next year's Academy."

But whatever his original intention may have been, the *Sarasate* went to Suffolk Street with several small Notes and Harmonies. If, in electing him, the British Artists hoped to attract attention to their exhibition, they were not disappointed. "The eccentric Mr. Whistler has gone to a neglected little gallery, the British Artists, which he will probably bring into fashion," Mr. (now Sir) Claude Phillips wrote in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (July 1885), and this is what happened. The distinction of the *Sarasate* could not be denied. But in his other work he was pronounced "vastly amusing," the *Pall Mall Gazette* seizing this

occasion to remind him of "Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' virtuous determination never to be as funny as he could. It is so bad for the young." Soon Whistler proposed that Sunday receptions should be given in the gallery, and that medals should be awarded. He got Mr. Menpes in as a water-colourist, thus establishing distinct sections in the Society, a scheme he carried out in the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers, and he suggested that photographs of pictures shown should be sold in the gallery, an idea copied all over the world. For the Winter Exhibition of 1885–86 he had another interesting group, including the *Portrait of Mrs. Cassatt* and a *Note in Green and Violet*. The *Mrs. Cassatt* has not been exhibited in England since, and is one of the least known of his portraits. Mr. Cassatt, who was among the few believers in Whistler at this period, came from Paris to London in April 1883, especially to have it painted, and was with Mrs. Cassatt during the sittings at 13 Tite Street. She has vivid memories of the brilliant talk between the two men. It is amusing that Whistler, after having told them the story of *The Peacock Room*, should have himself arranged for them to see it, and that then they heard Leyland's story. Mrs. Cassatt wanted to be painted in an evening gown. Mr. Cassatt preferred her riding habit. "The very thing," said Whistler, and so in her riding habit and tall hat she stands on the canvas. Perhaps it was because of her disappointment that she could not see a likeness in the portrait. Whistler realised this, but, he told her, "After all, it's a Whistler." Mr. Cassatt, punctilious in these matters, paid Whistler for the painting before he returned to America. Two years passed, and still no portrait. Whistler had probably kept it back for the British Artists. Mr. Cassatt at last wrote. They had their reward for the delay. A letter of apologies came from Whistler and was followed by a case, with not only the portrait in it, but *The Chelsea Girl*, a painting as little known, and now reproduced for the first time as far as we have record.

At the British Artists' the *Note in Green and Violet*, a small pastel of a nude, created a far greater sensation than the portrait. About a month before the show opened, the late J. C. Horsley, R.A., had read, during a Church Congress, a paper no one would have given a thought to had not Whistler immortalised it. Horsley said:

"If those who talk and write so glibly as to the desirability of

artists devoting themselves to the representation of the naked human form, only knew a tithe of the degradation enacted before the model is sufficiently hardened to her shameful calling, they would for ever hold their tongues and pens in supporting the practice. Is not clothedness a distinct type and feature of our Christian faith? All art representations of nakedness are out of harmony with it."

Whistler answered with "one of the little things that Providence sometimes sent him": "*Horsley soit qui mal y pense*," he wrote on a label, and fastened it to the *Note in Green and Violet*. The British Artists were alarmed, for to enter Suffolk Street was not to abandon hope of the Academy. The label was removed, not before it had been seen. The critic of the *Pall Mall* referred to it as Whistler's "indignant protest against the idea that there is any immorality in the nude." Whistler, who knew when ridicule served better than indignation, wrote: "Art certainly requires no 'indignant protest' against the unseemliness of senility. *Horsley soit qui mal y pense* is meanwhile a sweet sentiment—why more—and why 'morality'?" But the critic could not understand, and he was discovered one day "walking in Pall Mall with the nude on his arm."

The revenue of the Society had been rapidly decreasing, a deficit of five hundred pounds had to be faced. To meet it Whistler proposed that the luncheon to the Press be discontinued. It was an almost general custom then to feast the critics at press views of picture exhibitions. But in few was the cloth more lavishly spread than at the British Artists', in few were boxes of cigars and whiskies-and-sodas placed so conveniently. The younger critics resented it, the old ones lived for it. Press day, the dreariest in the year at the Royal Academy, was the most delightful at the British Artists', they said. Mr. Sidney Starr tells a story of one, when Whistler had not hung his picture, but only the frame:

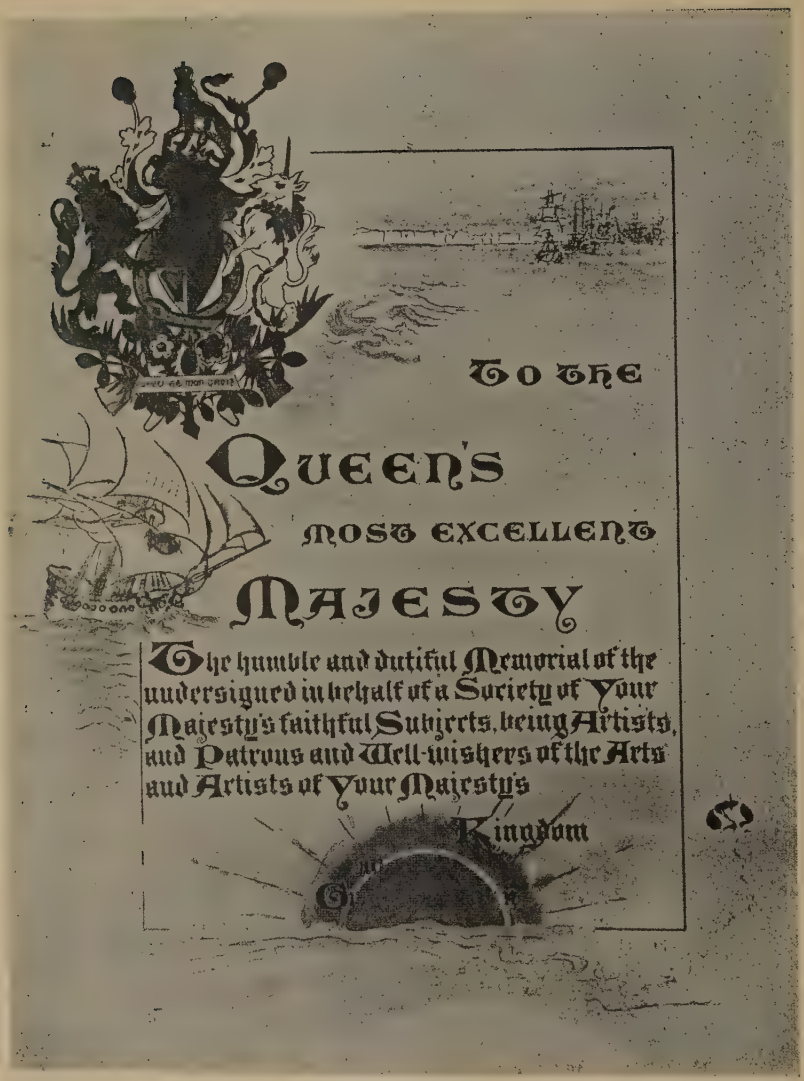
"Telegrams were sent imploring the placing of the canvas. But the only answer that came was, 'The Press have ye always with you; feed my lambs.' A smoking-concert followed during the exhibition. At this, one critic said to the Master, 'Your picture is not up to your mark, it is not good this time.' 'You should not say it isn't good; you should say you don't like it, and then, you know, you're perfectly

PORTRAITS OF MAUD

OIL (DESTROYED)

From photographs lent by Pickford R. Waller, Esq.

(*See page 206*)


To the
Queen's
most excellent
Majesty
The humble and dutiful Memorial of the undersigned in behalf of a Society of Your Majesty's faithful Subjects, being Artists, and Patrons and Well-wishers of the Arts and Artists of Your Majesty's
Kingdom

JUBILEE MEMORIAL

ILLUMINATION

In the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle

(*See page 264*)

safe ; now come and have something you do like, have some whisky,' said Whistler."

In the place of the luncheon, Whistler suggested a Sunday breakfast when members should pay for themselves and their guests. But members were horrified ; his motion was lost.

In April 1886, Mr. William Graham's collection came up for auction at Christie's. The sale brought to it the buyers and admirers of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, many of whose pictures Graham had bought. Whistler's *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (*Blue and Gold*), *Old Battersea Bridge* belonged to him. When it appeared " there was a slight attempt at an ironical cheer, which being mistaken for serious applause, was instantly suppressed by an angry hiss all round," and it was sold for sixty pounds to Mr. R. H. C. Harrison. Whistler acknowledged through the *Observer* (April 11, 1886), " the distinguished, though I fear unconscious, compliment so publicly paid." Such recognition rarely, he said, came to the painter during his lifetime, and to his friends he spoke of it as an unheard-of success, the first time such a thing had happened. The hisses in their ears, the British Artists were dismayed by his one contribution to the Summer Exhibition of 1886. This was a *Harmony in Blue and Gold*, a full-length of a girl in draperies of blue and green, leaning against a railing and holding a parasol, an arrangement, like the *Six Projects*, uniting classic design with Japanese detail. The draperies were transparent, and to defy Horsley and the British Matron was no part of the British Artists' policy. They were doubtless the more shocked when they read the comments in the Press. The most amusing revelation of British prudery, worth preserving as typical, appeared in the *Court and Society Review* (June 24, 1886) in a letter, signed " A Country Collector," protesting against the praise of Mr. Malcolm Salaman, who was the art critic of that paper :

" I am invited to gaze at an unfinished, rubbishy sketch of a young woman, who, if she is not naked, ought to be, for she would then be more decent. . . . The figure is more naked than nude : the colour what there is of it, is distinctly unpleasant. For my part, sir, I will not believe in Mr. Whistler ; my daughters have commanded me to admire him—I will *not* admire him. How they can quietly stare at the ill-painted, sooty-faced young woman in ' blue and gold ' passes me. But things are altered now, and my girls gaze with critical calmness

and carefully balanced *pince-nez* on that which would have sent their grandmothers shrieking from the gallery."

And Whistler, he declared, was a "poseur" and the picture "a colossal piece of pyramidal impudence."

Whistler was not represented at the Grosvenor, and at the *Salon* only by the *Sarasate*, which went afterwards to the "XX" Club in Brussels. His show in 1886 was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's Gallery. They exhibited and published for him the *Set of Twenty-Six Etchings*, twenty-one of the plates done in Venice, the other five in England, the price fifty guineas. With the prints he issued the often-quoted *Propositions*, the first series; the laws, as he defined them, of etching. He said that in etching, as in every other art, the space covered should be in proportion to the means used for covering it, and that the delicacy of the needle demands the smallness of the plate; that the "Remarque," then in vogue, emanated from the amateur; that there should be no margin to receive a "Remarque"; and that the habit of margin also came from the outsider. For a few years these *Propositions* were accepted by artists. At the present time they are ignored or defied, and the bigger the plate the better pleased is the etcher and his public. Later in the year, in May, Messrs. Dowdeswell arranged in their gallery a second series of *Notes—Harmonies—Nocturnes*. A few were in oil, a few in pencil, but the larger number were pastels and water-colours. They were studies of the nude, impressions of the sea at Dieppe and Dover, St. Ives and Trouville, the little shops of London and Paris, the skies and canals of Holland. Whistler decorated the room in Brown and Gold, choosing the brown paper for the walls, designing the mouldings of the dado. Mr. Walter Dowdeswell has the sketch of the scheme in raw umber, yellow ochre, raw sienna, and white; he has also preserved the brown-and-yellow hangings, and the yellow velarium. On the cover for the mantelpiece, the Butterfly, placed to one side, is without a sting. "Where is the sting?" Mr. Dowdeswell asked. "That," Whistler said, "is in my waistcoat pocket. I am keeping it for the critics." The exhibition was received with mingled praise and blame, and it would not have been a success financially had not Mr. H. S. Theobald, K.C., purchased all that earlier buyers left on Messrs. Dowdeswell's hands.

In the following summer Mr. Burr refused to stand again for the

Presidency, and at a General Meeting (June 1, 1886), Whistler was elected. The excitement was intense. Whistler alone was calm and unmoved. Mr. Ingram, a scrutineer, remembers coming for Whistler's vote and being so excited that Whistler tried to reassure him: "Never mind, never mind, you've done your best!" The meeting adjourned to the Hogarth Club for supper. "*J'y suis, j'y reste*," Whistler wired his brother. The comic papers were full of caricatures, the serious papers of astonishment. He was hailed as "President Whistler" by his friends, and denounced by members of the Society as an artist with no claim to be called British. Younger painters rushed to his support, and one French critic, Marcel Roland, prophesied that, "*l'œuvre de Whistler ne quittera son atelier que pour aller tout droit s'ennuyer à jamais sur les murs des grandes salles du Louvre. La place est marquée entre Paul Véronèse et Vélasquez.*" It was suggested by Mr. Malcolm Salaman that "all the rising young painters to whom we must look for the future of British art will flock to the standard of Mr.—why not Sir James—Whistler, rather than to that of Sir Frederick Leighton"—a prophecy fulfilled in the early days of the International, while the question as to whether Whistler would have accepted a knighthood has lately been discussed. He would doubtlessly, could he have done so without losing his American citizenship, but he would not have sold his citizenship for it. Honorary rank and British orders could have been conferred upon him, as they are often upon foreign politicians, social nonentities, or useful financiers without loss of their citizenship. But in British orders, as Lord Melbourne said of the Garter, "there is no damn question of merit about it."

Whistler intended going to America in the fall, but the journey was postponed. He wrote to the *World* (October 13, 1886), "this is no time for hesitation—one cannot continually disappoint a Continent," and he settled down to the task of directing the fortunes of a Society which looked to him for help, its members divided among themselves in their confidence in him as President.

CHAPTER XXX : THE BRITISH ARTISTS. THE FALL. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SIX TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT.

According to the constitution of the British Artists the President, though elected in June, does not take office until December. Whistler presided for the first time on December 10, 1886, and from that day he was supported devotedly by one faction and opposed fiercely by the other.

For the Winter Exhibition (1886–87) he decorated the galleries with the same care as his own shows. He put up a velarium, he covered the walls with muslin. The muslin gave out, leaving a bare space under the ceiling. "But what matter?" he said, "the battens are well placed, they make good lines," and they became part of the decoration. He would allow no crowding, the walls were to be the background of good pictures well spaced, well arranged. He urged the virtue of rejection. Mr. Starr says, "He was oblivious to every interest but the quality of the work shown." He told Mr. Menpes, one of the Hanging Committee, "If you are uncertain for a moment, say 'Out.' We want clean spaces round our pictures. We want them to be seen. The British Artists' must cease to be a shop."

This was resented. The modern exhibition is a shop, and as long as most painters have their way a shop it will remain. He exhibited *Nocturne in Brown and Gold* (afterwards *Blue and Gold*), *St. Mark's, Venice*—he told the members on varnishing day that it was his best; *Harmony in Red : Lamplight*, Mrs. Godwin, and *Harmony in White and Ivory*, Lady Colin Campbell, a beautiful portrait of a beautiful woman, one of many that have disappeared. It was not finished when Whistler sent it in, an excuse for dissatisfied members to propose its removal. The question was not put to the meeting when the matter came up, but a proposition to define the rights of the President and the President-elect was carried.

One of Whistler's first acts was to offer to loan the Society five hundred pounds to pay its debts. Mr. Starr describes him, "during this time of fluctuating finances, pawning his large gold *Salon* medal one day, lending five hundred pounds to the British Artists the next.

He often found ' a long face and a short account at the Bank,' he said one day."

He did everything he could to increase the prestige of the Society. All that was charming was to be encouraged, all that was tedious was to be done away with. He got distinguished artists to join: Charles Keene, Alfred Stevens, and the more promising younger men. He allowed several to call themselves in the catalogue " pupils of Whistler," and to make drawings of the gallery and his pictures for the illustrated papers. The sketches of *Sarasate* in the *Pall Mall's Pictures of* 1885, and of *Harmony in Blue and Gold*, and his exhibition at Dowdeswell's gallery in *Pictures of* 1886 are by him. But after this Mr. Theodore Roussel, Mr. Walter Sickert, Mr. Sidney Starr made the drawings for reproduction. He gave the Art Union, organised by the Society, a plate, *The Fish Shop—Busy Chelsea*, one year, and another, a painting done at St. Ives. In the March meeting (1887) he proposed a limit of size for exhibits, he contributed twenty pounds towards a scheme of decoration, and he presented four velvet curtains for the doorways in the large room. There is a drawing, showing curtains and velarium, by Mr. Roussel in the *Pall Mall's Pictures of* 1887. Whistler's early *Nocturne in Blue and Gold*, *Valparaiso Bay; Nocturne in Black and Gold*, *The Gardens* (Cremorne); *Harmony in Grey*, *Chelsea in Ice*, were hung, and with them his latest, *Arrangement in Violet and Pink*, *Portrait of Mrs. Walter Sickert.* This is the first of the two portraits he painted of Mrs. Sickert, and from her we learned that it was destroyed.

Most of the members regarded the President's innovations as an interference with their rights. He might pay their debts, that was one thing; it was another to make their gallery beautiful by chucking their pictures. Their resentment increased on the occasion of a visit from the Prince of Wales. Whistler stayed late the day before to finish the decoration. When the members came, doors and dados were painted yellow. Whistler, with whom great fault was found, refused to have anything further to do with the decorations, though they were unfinished. There was fright carried that evening to a smoking-concert at the Hogarth Club, where everybody was talking of the arrangement in yellow. He was telegraphed for. " So discreet of you all at the Hogarth " was his answer, and he did not appear until it was time

to meet the Prince, though in the meantime members tried to tone down the yellow. Whistler told us:

"I went downstairs to meet the Prince. As we were walking up, I a little in front with the Princess, the Prince, who always liked to be well informed in these matters, asked what the Society was—Was it an old institution? What was its history? 'Sir, it has none, its history dates from to-day!' I said."

But the old members say that when the Prince went downstairs with one of them his remark was: "Who is that funny little man we have been talking to?"

The dissatisfaction was brought before a meeting, when a proposition was made and passed "that the experiment of hanging pictures in an isolated manner be discontinued," and that, in future, enough works be accepted to cover the vacant space above and below the line—in fact, that the gallery be hung as before. It is said that some members made an extimate of the amount of wall-space left bare, and calculated the loss in pounds, shillings and pence.

We saw this exhibition, though we did not see Whistler. We remember the quiet, well-spaced walls, and the portrait of Mrs. Sickert, also works by Dannat and William Stott. It should not be forgotten that the British Artists' was arranged and hung by Whistler years before there was any idea of artistic hanging in German Secessions—we believe, before there were any Secessions. Whistler had applied to his own shows the same method of spacing and hanging, and decorating the walls with an appropriate colour-scheme. It had occurred to no one before him that beautiful things should be shown beautifully, and it is not too much to say that the attention given to-day to the artistic arrangement of picture exhibitions is due entirely to Whistler. The resurrection of the velarium, designed, made, and hung after his scheme, has revolutionised the lighting of picture galleries, though in very few is his scheme intelligently followed.

1887 was Queen Victoria's Jubilee, and every society of artists prepared addresses to Her Majesty; Whistler could not permit his Society to appear less ceremoniously loyal. His account to us was:

"Well, you know, I found that the Academy and the Institute and the rest of them were preparing addresses to the Queen, and so I went to work too, and I prepared a most wonderful address. Instead of

the illuminated performances for such occasions, I took a dozen folio sheets of my old Dutch paper. I had them bound by Zaehnsdorf. First came the beautiful binding in yellow morocco and the inscription to Her Majesty, every word just in the right place—most wonderful. You opened it, and on the first page you found a beautiful little drawing of the royal arms that I made myself; the second page, an etching of Windsor, as though 'there's where you live!' On the third page the address began. I made decorations all round the text in water-colour, at the top the towers of Windsor, down one side a great battleship plunging through the waves, and below, the sun that never sets on the British Empire—What? The following pages were not decorated, just the most wonderful address, explaining the age and dignity of the Society, its devotion to Her Glorious, Gracious Majesty, and suggesting the honour it would be if this could be recognised by a title that would show the Society to belong specially to Her. Then, the last page; you turned, and there was a little etching of my house at Chelsea—'And now, here's where I live!' And then you closed it, and at the back of the cover was the Butterfly. This was all done and well on its way and not a word was said to the Society, when the Committee wrote and asked me if I would come to a meeting as they wished to consult me. It was about an address to Her Majesty—all the other Societies were sending them—and they thought they should too. I asked what they proposed spending—they were aghast when I suggested that the guinea they mentioned might not meet a twentieth of the cost. But, all the time, my beautiful address was on its way to Windsor, and finally came the Queen's acknowledgment and command that the Society should be called Royal—I carried this to a meeting and it was stormy. One member got up and protested against one thing and another, and declared his intention of resigning. 'You had better make a note of it, Mr. Secretary,' I said. And then I got up with great solemnity, and I announced the honour conferred upon them by Her Gracious Majesty, and they jumped up and they rushed towards me with outstretched hands. But I waved them all off, and I continued with the ceremonial to which they objected. For the ceremonial was one of their grievances. They were accustomed to meet in shirt-sleeves—free-and-easy fashion which I would not stand. Nor would I consent to what was the rule and tradition of the Society. I would not, when

I spoke, step down from the chair and stand up in the body of the meeting, but I remained always where I was. But, the meeting over, then I sent for champagne."

Whistler, as President of the British Artists, was invited to the Jubilee ceremonies in Westminster Abbey, and in Mr. Lorimer's painting he may be seen on one side of the triforium, Leighton on the other. *Jubilee in the Abbey*, an etching, gives his impressions. He was asked also to the State garden-party at Buckingham Palace, and to the Naval Review off Spithead, when he made the *Naval Review* series of plates and at least one water-colour in a day. Naturally, when the Royal Academy neglected to invited him to their *soirée*, though hitherto they had always invited the President of the British Artists, he resented it as an insult not only to himself, but to the Society. " It really was a pretty little recognition of my own personality beneath the cloak of office," he wrote in an often-quoted letter to Leighton, then President of the Royal Academy.

The year before, Mr. Ayerst Ingram had proposed that the Society should give a show of the President's work to precede their Summer Exhibition of 1887. This had met with so many objections that though the motion was not withdrawn as Whistler wanted, it was dropped. After the new honours were obtained by him for the Society, and while he was travelling in Belgium and Holland, an effort was made to revive the scheme. Mr. Ingram did what he could. Mr. Walter Dowdeswell acted as honorary secretary, guarantors were found, owners of pictures were written to. February and March 1888 was the time appointed, but Whistler doubted the sincerity of the Society and would not risk anything less than an " absolute triumph of perfection " for an undertaking made in the name of the British Artists or his own. To him no success was worse than failure. At the end of September nothing definite had been arranged, and Whistler told Mr. Ingram that his " solitary evidence of active interest could hardly bring about a result sufficient to excuse such an eleventh-hour effort."

He was right. The opposition in the Society was strong, and many members were in open warfare with their President. They refused to support him in his proposition that no member of the Society should be, or should remain, a member of any other Society, and when he followed this with the proposition that no member of the Royal Society of

British Artists who was a member of any other Society should serve on the Selecting or Hanging Committee, they again defeated him. Nor did they persuade him to reconsider the formal withdrawal, on November 18, of his permission to show his works. He sent, however, several water-colours and the twelve etchings of the *Naval Review* to the Winter Exhibition (1887–88), and four lithographs from the *Art Notes* published that autumn by the Goupils. They were described in the *Magazine of Art* (December 1887) as mere lead pencil "notes reproduced in marvellous *facsimile*," which gave Whistler his chance for a courteous reminder in the *World* to "the bewildered one." The critic might inquire, he said; "the safe and well-conducted one informs himself." Within the Society he had once more to contend against the opposition to his hanging and spacing, and a fresh grievance was that space was filled with the work of Monet, as yet hardly known in England. One of the older members, when he looked at Whistler's *Red Note*, declared, "If he can do that, I'll forgive him—he can do anything." But few could forgive so easily. They objected that "Whistler would have his way, and didn't mind if he made enemies in getting it," and they began to whisper that in the matter of the memorial he had been dictatorial. The situation is best described in the words of Mr. Holmes to us: "With a little more of Disraeli and a little less of Oliver Cromwell, Whistler would have triumphed."

The crisis came in April 1888, before the Summer Exhibition. It was suggested that the Council communicate with the President as to the removal of temporary decorations which he had designed and they had paid for. One decoration the Society did not object to was a velarium, since it meant no loss of wall-space, and when Whistler removed this they ordered a new one. Whistler, through his secretary, explained to the Committee that the velarium was his patent—"a patent taken out by the Greeks and Romans" is Mr. Ingram's comment. Whistler got out an injunction; when the Committee, with their order for the velarium, hurried to Hampton's shop, his secretary was at their heels in a hansom with the injunction; the secretary arrived with them at Liberty's, but somehow they managed, in the end, to evade him. A velarium was made and put up, and they proceeded to get rid of their President. At a meeting on May 7 a letter, signed by eight members

whose names do not appear in the minutes, was read, asking President Whistler to call a meeting to request Mr. James A. McNeill Whistler to resign his membership in the Society, and he called the meeting and signed the minutes. The President made a speech, in which he claimed that his action in the matter of the velarium was not inimical to the welfare of the Society, but the speech was not recorded. He permitted no one to speak in opposition, and the subject was dropped. At the special meeting called by him the same month there was an exhaustive discussion. Whistler declared his position. His opponents presented an array of lawyer's letters, which they said showed that Whistler had threatened injunctions, had greatly impeded the Executive in the decoration of the galleries, and had influenced many distinguished people to keep away from the private view. A vote was taken for his expulsion, though Mr. Ingram proposed a vote of censure in its place. Whistler refused at first to put the motion to expel himself, but finally was compelled to do so. There were eighteen votes for, nineteen against it, and nine members did not vote. The votes, Whistler said, when he addressed the meeting after the ballot, showed that the Society approved of his action. Mr. Francis James at once proposed a vote of censure on those who had signed the letter, but this was not carried. On June 4, at the annual election, when a whip had been sent round to all members, Wyke Bayliss was elected President, and Whistler resigned from the Society, congratulating the members on the election : " Now, at last, you must be satisfied. You can no longer say you have the right man in the wrong place ! "

Mr. Starr recalls his saying : " Now I understand the feelings of all those who, since the world began, have tried to save their fellow men."

The minority resigned, as Mr. Menpes, foreseeing the inevitable, had a month earlier, which led to Whistler's comment on " the early rat who leaves the sinking ship." All who had joined the Society with him left it with him, and he said " the Artists came out and the British remained."

Mr. Menpes describes a supper of the Artists after the meeting at the Hogarth Club. He says he was taken back into favour, and joined the party. " What are you going to do with them all ? " he asked. " Lose them," said Whistler. But he did not lose them all. One or two stayed by him to the end.

PORTRAIT OF LADY MEUX
HARMONY IN PINK AND GREY
OIL
In the possession of H. C. Frick, Esq.

(*See page* 211)

THE SALUTE, VENICE

WATER-COLOUR

In the possession of B. B. MacGeorge, Esq.

(*See page* 202)

Whistler, according to the constitution, held office till December, and till December he retained his post. During this time there were meetings. At one he addressed Bayliss as Baily—to his disgust—but, on this occasion at least, Bayliss had an idea and replied, "Yes, Mr. Whistle!" At a meeting on November 28 Whistler made a statement of his relations with the Society, and his objects and aims concerning it, only referred to in the minutes, and he gave up the chair to Wyke Bayliss. He had been President two years, a member four. After November 28, 1888, his name appears in the official records only twice: first on January 4, 1889, in connection with a dispute over the notice board outside the gallery, and then on July 20, 1903, when Wyke Bayliss stated "that, acting on the feeling that it would be the wish of the Society, he had ordered a wreath to be sent in the name of the Society on the occasion of the funeral of Mr. Whistler."

The newspapers were not so shy of the President as the minute-books. The difference between Whistler and the Society found the publicity which he could never escape. He said to the men who resigned with him, "Come and make history for posterity," and, as usual, he saw that the record was accurate. He had hardly left the Society when the notice board, with the Butterfly and the lion which he had painted, was altered; he immediately wrote a letter to state the fact in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Reporters and interviewers gave the British Artists' reasons for their late President's resignation and his successor's qualifications for the post. Whistler lost no time in explaining his position, and giving his estimate of the new President. It cannot be said too often that his letters to the Press, criticised as trivial and undignified, were written deliberately that "history might be made." Many pages of *The Gentle Art* are filled with his relations with the British Artists. The gaiety of his letters was mistaken for flippancy, because the more solemn and ponderous the "enemies" became, the more "joyous" he grew in disposing of them. He did not spare the British Artists. The *Pall Mall* undertook to describe the disaster of the "Whistlerian policy" in Suffolk Street by statistics and to extol the strength of Wyke Bayliss:

"The sales of the Society during the year 1881 were under five thousand pounds; 1882, under six thousand; 1883, under seven thousand; 1884, under eight thousand; 1885 (the first year of Mr.

Whistler's rule), they fell to under four thousand; 1885, under three thousand; 1887, under two thousand; and the present year, 1888, under one thousand. . . . The new President . . . is . . . the hero of three Bond Street 'one-man exhibitions,' a board-school chairman, a lecturer, champion chess-player of Surrey, a member of the Rochester Diocesan Council, a Shakespearean student, a Fellow of the Society of Cyclists, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquarians, and public orator of Noviomagus."

Whistler's answer, serious in intention, gay in wording, pointed out "the, for once, not unamusing 'fact' that the disastrous and simple Painter Whistler only took in hand the reins of government at least a year after the former driver had been pitched from his box and half the money-bags had been already lost! From eight thousand to four thousand at one fatal swoop! and the beginning of the end had set in! . . . 'Four thousand pounds!' down it went; three thousand pounds, two thousand pounds—the figures are Wyke's—and this season, the ignominious 'one thousand pounds or under' is none of my booking! And when last I saw the mad machine it was still cycling down the hill."

Whistler was disappointed, though he did not show it. He was seldom invited to join anything, nor did he rush to accept the rare invitation. He would take no part in the Art Congress started in the eighties, despite an effort to entangle him; he would do no more than "bestow his benison" upon the movement in 1886 to organise a National Art Exhibition, led by Walter Crane, Holman Hunt, and George Clausen. But to the British Artists he had given his time and energy during four years, he had dragged the Society out of the slough in which it was floundering and made its exhibitions the most distinguished and most talked-about in London. Wyke Bayliss, who never understood him, wrote: "Whistler's purpose was to make the British Artists a small, esoteric set; mine was to make it a great guild of the working artists of this country."

Whistler said: "I wanted to make the British Artists an art centre; they wanted to remain a shop."

Wyke Bayliss and his successor were knighted, as Presidents of Royal Societies usually are; Whistler, who obtained the title and charter of the Society, was ignored.

Ten years later, as President of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers, he not only recommended, but carried out his schemes and theories: the decoration of the galleries, the refusal of bad work no matter who sent it, the proper hanging of the pictures accepted, the making of the exhibitions into artistic events, the interesting of the public in them, the insistence that each artist should only support his own Society's exhibitions and should belong to no other Society. He was dictatorial, but without a dictator nothing can be done, and at the British Artists' each British Artist wanted to lead. His Presidency began in mistrust and ended in discord. For Whistler it had an advantage, especially abroad, where artists began to regard him with deference.

CHAPTER XXXI: MARRIAGE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT.

"I don't marry," Whistler said, "though I tolerate those who do." But before he left the British Artists' he did marry. His wife was Beatrix Godwin, widow of E. W. Godwin, the architect of the White House and for years Whistler's champion in the Press. Godwin died on October 6, 1886, and Whistler married on August 11, 1888.

Mrs. Whistler was the daughter of John Birnie Philip, remembered as one of the sculptors who worked on the awful Albert Memorial. She was large, so that Whistler was dwarfed beside her, dark and handsome, more foreign in appearance, but not in person, than English. Whistler delighted in a tradition that there was gipsy blood in her family. She had studied art in Paris and with him, and he was proud of her as a pupil. Her work included several decorative designs, and a series of etchings made to illustrate the English edition of Van Eeden's *Little Johannes*. Only a few of the plates were finished, and of these some proofs were shown in the first exhibition of the International Society and in the Paris Memorial Exhibition, while Mr. Heinemann had the intention of publishing a series of illustrations which she and Whistler drew on the wood.

Mr. Labouchere held himself responsible for the marriage, and told the story in *Truth* (July 23, 1903):

"I believe that I am responsible for his marriage to the widow of Mr. Godwin, the architect. She was a remarkably pretty woman and very agreeable, and both she and he were thorough Bohemians. I was dining with them and some others one evening at Earl's Court. They were obviously greatly attracted to each other, and in a vague sort of way they thought of marrying. So I took the matter in hand to bring things to a practical point. 'Jemmy,' I said, 'will you marry Mrs. Godwin?' 'Certainly,' he replied. 'Mrs. Godwin,' I said, 'will you marry Jemmy?' 'Certainly,' she replied. 'When?' I asked. 'Oh, some day,' said Whistler. 'That won't do,' I said, 'we must have a date.' So they both agreed that I should choose the day, what church to come to for the ceremony, provide the clergyman, and give the bride away. I fixed an early date, and got the then Chaplain of the House of Commons [the Rev. Mr. Byng] to perform the ceremony. It took place a few days later.

"After the ceremony was over, we adjourned to Whistler's studio, where he had prepared a banquet. The banquet was on the table, but there were no chairs. So we sat on packing-cases. The happy pair, when I left, had not quite decided whether they would go that evening to Paris or remain in the studio. How unpractical they were was shown when I happened to meet the bride the day before the marriage in the street:

"'Don't forget to-morrow,' I said. 'No,' she replied, 'I am just going to buy my trousseau.' 'A little late for that, is it not?' I asked. 'No,' she answered, 'for I am only going to buy a new tooth-brush and a new sponge, as one ought to have new ones when one marries.'"

The wedding took place at St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington, in the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Whistler, one of Mrs. Godwin's sisters, Mrs. Whibley, and three or four others. Mr. Labouchere gave the bride away and Mr. Jopling-Rowe was best man. Whistler had recently left 454 Fulham Road and the Vale, with its memories of Maud, for the Tower House, Tite Street, and the suddenness of his marriage gave no time to put things in order. There were not only packing-cases in the dining-room—usually one of the first rooms furnished in every house he moved into—but the household was in most respects unprepared for the reception of a bride. The wedding breakfast

was ordered from the Café Royal, and the bride's sister hurriedly got a wedding cake from Buszard's.

The rest of the summer and autumn was spent in France, part of the time in Boulogne. Mr. and Mrs. Cole, on

"*August* 27 (1888). Met Jimmy and his wife on the sands: they came up with us to Rue de la Paix, down to bathe. Jimmy sketching on sands; the W.'s turned up after lunch. With Jimmy to the iron and rag *marché* near Boulevard Prince Albert [no doubt in search of old paper as well as of subjects]. He sketched (water-colours) a dingy shop. Later we dined with them at the Casino. Pleasant *parti à quatre*. Jimmy in excellent form. Leaving to-morrow."

From Boulogne they went to Touraine, stopping at Chartres, most of the time lost to their friends, as they intended to be lost. It was Whistler's first holiday. He was taking it lazily, he wrote to Mrs. William Whistler, in straw hat and white shoes, rejoicing in the grapes and melons, getting the pleasure out of it that France always gave him. But he got more than pleasure. He brought back to London about thirty plates of Tours and Loches and Bourges, and settled down in London to wind up his connection with the British Artists'.

Whistler was devoted to his wife, who henceforth occupied a far more prominent position in his life than could have been imagined. Indeed his life was entirely changed by his marriage. He went less into society and had less time for his art. During months he was a wanderer, and while he wandered his painting stopped. Not that Mrs. Whistler was indifferent to art. She was sympathetic. He liked to have her in the studio; when she could not come he brought the pictures he was painting home for her to see. He consulted her in his difficulties, she shared his troubles, she rejoiced in his triumphs. But it cannot be denied that the period of great schemes came to an end with his marriage. Although later he painted exquisite pictures, there are no canvases like the *Mother* and *Carlyle*, the *Sarasate* and *The Yellow Buskin*. This was no doubt the result partly of his pleasure in his new domestic conditions, partly of circumstances that prevented him from remaining long enough in one place for continuous work to be possible. An artist must give himself entirely to his work, or else have a very different temperament from Whistler's. After a year or so in London and two or three happy years in Paris which Mrs.

Whistler said she did not deserve, her health necessitated wandering again.

Commissions at last came, but Mrs. Whistler's illness left him no chance to carry them out. He said to us one day: "Now, they want these things; why didn't they want them twenty years ago, when I wanted to do them, and could have done them? And they were just as good twenty years ago as they are now."

Few large portraits begun during these years were completed. And after his wife's death he struggled in vain to return to the old conditions of continuous effort to which the world owes his greatest masterpieces. It is true that his work never deteriorated till the last, that, as he said, he brought it ever nearer to the perfection which alone could satisfy him. He never produced anything finer in their way than *The Master Smith* and *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis*, painted towards the end of his married life, or the series of children's heads of his latest years. But these were planned on a smaller scale and required less physical effort than the large full-lengths and the decorative designs he longed to execute, but was never able to finish, sometimes not even to begin. Whistler, with advancing years, became more sure of himself, more the master, but circumstances forced him to find his pleasure and exercise his knowledge in smaller work.

CHAPTER XXXII: THE WORK OF THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO.

These years were full, for though few large paintings were completed, there were many small oils, water-colours, pastels, etchings, and lithographs. Whistler, going and coming in England or on the Continent, had trunks and bags with compartments for his colours, plates, and lithographic materials. It is impossible to say, he did not know, the exact number of small works he produced during this period.

He had used water-colour since his school-days, but, until he went to Venice, not to any extent. Some of the Venetian drawings show that he was then scarcely master of it. But the results he finally got, both in figure and landscape, were admirable. He touched perfection

in many a little angry sea at Dieppe, or note in Holland, or impression of Paris. As not many are dated it may never be known when this mastery was reached. He probably would not have been sure of the dates. We have gone through drawers of the cabinet in his studio with him, when he expressed the utmost surprise on finding certain things that he had forgotten, and was unable to say when they were painted or drawn. He suffered from this confusion and realised the importance of making a complete list of his works, with their dates, and there were various projects and commencements. After several attempts he found it took too much time. We know that he asked Mr. Freer to trace his pictures in America and Mr. D. Croal Thomson to do the same in England. Miss Birnie Philip finally swore in the Law Courts that what he wanted was for us to prepare a complete catalogue.

Between 1880 and 1892 he made ninety plates in England. They begin with *Regent's Quadrant.* Then follow little shops in Chelsea, Gray's Inn, Westminster, the Wild West (Earl's Court), Whitechapel, Sandwich, the Jubilee, and many figure subjects. There is also the *Swan and Iris*, the copy of an unfinished picture by Cecil Lawson for Mr. Edmund Gosse's *Memoir* of the painter (1883), another unsuccessful attempt at reproduction. It was the only plate, since those published by the Junior Etching Club, made as an illustration. *Billingsgate* was issued in the *Portfolio* (1878) and Hamerton's *Etching and Etchers* (1880), *Alderney Street* in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (1881), *La Marchande de Moutarde* in *English Etchings* (1888), but these were etched with no idea of their publication in magazine or book.

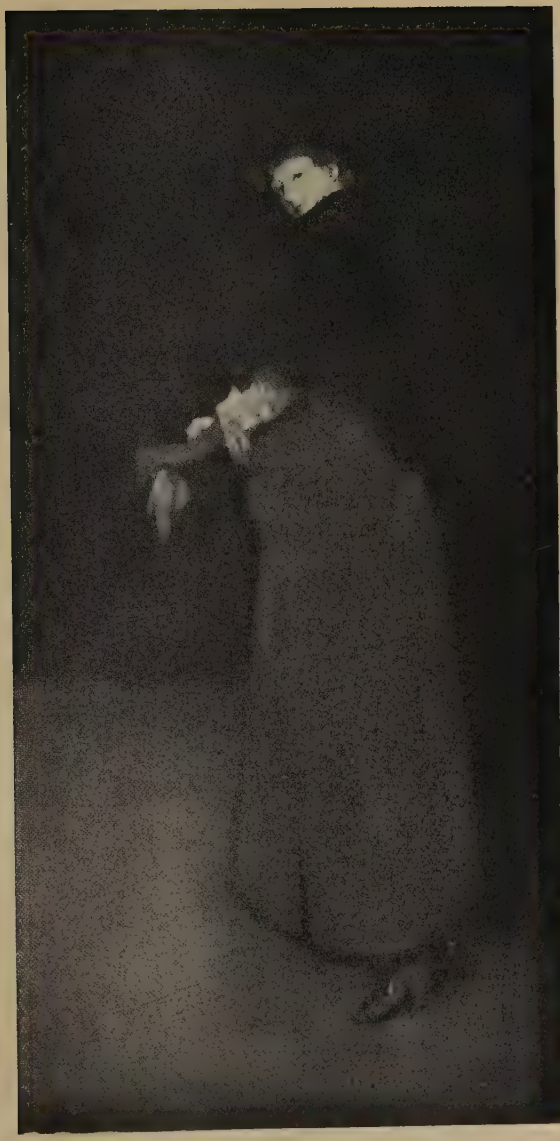
The English plates are simple in subject, and they have been therefore dismissed as unimportant by unimportant people. But many are delightfully composed and full of observation. Whistler carrying the small plates about with him, sketched on copper, with the knowledge of a lifetime, the subjects he found as other artists sketch on paper. Three etchings were made at the Wild West probably in an afternoon; one at Westminster Abbey during the Jubilee Service of 1887; and ten to thirteen of the Jubilee Naval Review in a day—plates that prove triumphantly his power of giving his impressions with a few lines of his etching-needle.

In the autumn of 1887 he went to Belgium with Dr. and Mrs. William Whistler, stopping at Brussels, Ostend, and Bruges. In Brussels he etched the Hôtel de Ville, the Guildhalls, the little shops and streets and courts, intending to issue the prints as a set. M. Octave Maus, who knew him, says "he was enchanted with the picturesque and disreputable quarter of *les Marolles* in the old town. He was frequently to be met in the alleys which pour a squalid populace into the old High Street, engaged in scratching on the copper his impressions of the swarming life around him. When the inquisitive throng pressed him too hard, the artist merely pointed his graver at the arm, or neck, or cheek of one of the intruders. The threatening weapon, with his sharp spiteful laugh, put them at once to flight."

Sometimes Dr. and Mrs. Whistler found him, safe out of the way of the crowd, in the bandstand of the Grande Place, where several of the plates were made. These are another development in technique. With the fewest, the most delicate, lines he expressed the most complicated and the most picturesque architecture. The plates were probably bitten with little stopping-out, and they are printed with a sharpness that shows their wonderful drawing. M. Duret has said to us that in them Whistler gives "*les os de l'architecture.*" A very few proofs were pulled. The set was never issued.

The etchings described as in Touraine are those done on his wedding journey and at other times. They also have never been published as a set. As in Belgium, great architecture suggested his subjects, and his treatment shows that if, as a rule, he refrained from rendering architecture, it was from no desire to evade difficulties, as ignorant critics suppose. The line is more vital and the biting more powerful than in the Belgian plates.

The year after his marriage (1889) he etched seventeen plates in and around Dordrecht and Amsterdam, including *Nocturne—Dance House*, *The Embroidered Curtain*, *The Balcony*, *Zaandam*, in which he surpassed Rembrandt in Rembrandt's subject. His success is the more surprising because scarcely anywhere does the artist sketch under such difficulties as in Holland. The little Dutch boys are the worst in the world, and the grown people as bad. In Amsterdam, the women in the houses on one of the canals, where Whistler worked in a boat, emptied buckets of water out of the windows above him. He dodged in time, but had



THE YELLOW BUSKIN
ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK
OIL
In the Wilstach Collection, Memorial Hall, Philadelphia

(*See page* 215)

PORTRAIT OF M. THÉODORE DURET
ARRANGEMENT IN FLESH-COLOUR AND PINK
[OIL
In the Metropolitan Museum, New York
(*See page 217*)

to call on the police, and, he told us, the next interruption was a big row above, and "I looked up, dodging the filthy pails, to see the women vanishing backward being carried off to wherever they carry people in Holland. After that, I had no more trouble, but I always had a policeman whenever I had a boat."

In the Dutch plates he returned to the methods prefected at Venice in *The Traghetto* and *The Beggars*. After he brought them back to London he was interviewed on the subject in the *Pall Mall Gazette* (March 4, 1890), and is reported to have said:

"First you see me at work on the Thames. Now, there you see the crude and hard detail of the beginner. So far, so good. There, you see, all is sacrificed to exactitude of outline. Presently and almost unconsciously I begin to criticise myself and to feel the craving of the artist for form and colour. The result was the second stage, which my enemies call inchoate and I call Impressionism. The third state I have shown you. In that I have endeavoured to combine stages one and two. You have the elaboration of the first stage and the quality of the second."

Though we hesitate to accept the words as his, this is an interesting statement and a suggestive description. In some of the Dutch plates there is more detail than in the Venetian, and yet form is expressed not by the detail of the Thames series but by line. No etcher had got such fullness of colour without a mass of cross-hatching that takes away from the freshness. It is interesting to contrast his distant views of the town of Amsterdam and the windmills of Zaandam with Rembrandt's etchings of the same subjects, and to note the greater feeling of space and distance that Whistler gives. The work is more elaborate and delicate than in previous plates, so delicate sometimes that it seems underbitten. But his method necessitated this. He drew with such minuteness that hardly any of the ground, the varnish, was left on the plates, and when he bit them, he could only bite slightly to prevent the modelling from being lost. He never had been so successful in applying his scientific theories to etching, and rarely more satisfied with the results. His first idea was to publish the prints in a set, through the Fine Art Society, but the Fine Art Society were so foolish as to refuse. A few were bought at once for the South Kensington and Windsor Collections, and several were shown in the

spring of 1890 at Mr. Dunthorne's gallery. About this time we returned to London, and J. commenced to write occasionally in the London Press, succeeding Mr. George Bernard Shaw as art critic on the *Star*. This is his impression, written when he saw them (April 8) :

"I stepped in at Dunthorne's the other afternoon to have a look at the etchings of Amsterdam by Mr. Whistler. There are only eight of them, I think, but they are eight of the most exquisite renderings by the most independent man of the century. With two exceptions they are only studies of very undesirable lodgings and tenements on canal banks, old crumbling brick houses reflected in sluggish canals, balconies with figures leaning over them, clothes hanging in decorative lines, a marvellously graceful figure carelessly standing in the great water-door of an overhanging house, every figure filled with life and movement, and all its character expressed in half a dozen lines. The same houses, or others, at night, their windows illuminated and casting long trailing reflections in the water, seemed to be singularly unsuccessful, the plate being apparently under-bitten or played out. At any rate that was the impression produced on me. [We know now and have explained the reason for this.] Another there was, of a stretch of country looking across a canal, windmills beyond drawn as no one since Rembrandt could have done it, and in his plate the greatest of modern etchers has pitted himself against the greatest of the ancients, and has come through only too successfully for Rembrandt. There are three or four others, I understand, not yet published, but this certainly is the gem so far. The last is a great drawbridge, with a suggestion of trees and houses, figures and boats, and a tower in the distance, done, I believe, from a canal in Amsterdam. This is the fourth distinct series of etchings which Mr. Whistler has in the last thirty or thirty-five years given the world : the early miscellaneous French and English plates ; the Thames series, valued by artists more than by collectors, though even to the latter they are worth more than their weight in gold ; the Venetian plates ; and now these ; and between while, portraits as full of character as Rembrandt's, studies of London and Brussels, and I know not what else besides have come from his ever busy needle. Had Mr. Whistler never put brush to canvas, he has done enough in these plates to be able to say that he will not altogether die."

That was J.'s opinion then, and he has not had to change it. During 1890 Whistler made a large number of lithographs, excellently catalogued by T. R. Way, who printed most of them and was, consequently, qualified for the task. Three, *The Winged Hat*, *The Tyresmith*, and *Maunder's Fish Shop, Chelsea*, were published this year in the short-lived occasional weekly *The Whirlwind*, edited by Herbert Vivian and Stuart Erskine "in the Legitimist cause" and to their own great amusement. Drawings by Sidney Starr after three of Whistler's pictures appeared, and the editors boasted in their own pages within a few weeks that the lithographs, issued for a penny, could be had only for five shillings. Five guineas would now be nearer the price.

Another lithograph, *Chelsea Rags*, came out in the January number (1892) of the *Albemarle*, a monthly edited by Hubert Crackanthorpe and W. H. Wilkins, one of those gay experiments in periodical literature no longer made in this sad land. The four were called *Songs on Stone*, the later title for a proposed portfolio of lithographs in colour which Mr. Heinemann announced but never issued.

CHAPTER XXXIII: HONOURS. EXHIBITIONS. NEW INTERESTS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-NINE TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-ONE.

Official recognition of Whistler in England was followed by official honours abroad. While President of the British Artists he was asked for the first time to show in the International Exhibition at Munich (1888). He sent *The Yellow Buskin* and was awarded a second-class medal. The best comment was Whistler's letter of acknowledgment to the Secretary, whom he prayed to convey to the Committee his "sentiments of tempered and respectable joy" and "complete appreciation of the second-hand compliment." But soon after he was elected an Honorary Member of the Bavarian Royal Academy, and, a year later, was given a first-class medal and the Cross of St. Michael. In 1889 he was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and received a first-class medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition. Another gold medal was awarded to him at Amsterdam, where he was showing the

Mother, *The Fur Jacket*, and *Effie Deans—Arrangement in Yellow and Grey*. We have heard that Israels and Mesdag, who were little in sympathy with Whistler, objected to giving him a medal, but James Maris insisted. The year before Mr. E. J. Van Wisselingh had bought from Messrs. Dowdeswell *Effie Deans*, which he had seen in the Edinburgh International Exhibition of 1886, though it was skied. He sold it within a short time to Baron Van Lynden, of The Hague, then making his collection, bequeathed by the Baroness Van Lynden in 1900 to the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. The picture is almost the only one to which Whistler gave a literary title, except the pastel *Annabel Lee*. *Effie Deans* is apparently a portrait of Maud, and it belongs to the period of *The Fur Jacket* and *Rosa Corder*. The Butterfly was added later. The painting was not signed when bought by Baron Van Lynden, who, hearing from Van Wisselingh that Whistler was in Holland, asked him to sign it. Whistler not only did so, but we believe then added the quotation from the *Heart of Midlothian* written at the bottom of the canvas: "She sunk her head upon her hand and remained seemingly unconscious as a statue," the only inscription on any of his paintings that we have seen. Walter Sickert says that it was added by some one else, but as Whistler saw the picture in 1902 and made no objection to it, Mr. Sickert's statement scarcely seems correct.

Few things pleased Whistler more than the honours from Amsterdam, Munich, and Paris. To celebrate the Bavarian medal and decoration his friends gave him a dinner at the Criterion, May 1, 1889. Mr. E. M. Underdown, Q.C., was in the chair, and Mr. W. C. Symons hon. secretary. Two Royal Academicians, Sir W. Q. Orchardson and Mr. Alfred Gilbert, were present, and also Sir Coutts Lindsay, Stuart Wortley, Edmund Yates—Atlas, who never failed him—and many others. Whistler was moved, and not ashamed to show it. Stuart Wortley, in a speech, said that Whistler had influenced every artist in England; Orchardson described him as "a true artist"; and this time Atlas spoke, not only with the weight of the *World* on his shoulders, but with praise and affection. Whistler began his speech with a laugh at this "age of rapid results when remedies insist upon their diseases." But his voice is said to have been full of emotion before the end:

"You must feel that, for me, it is no easy task to reply under con-

ditions of which I have so little habit. We are all even too conscious that mine has hitherto, I fear, been the gentle answer that sometimes turneth not away wrath. . . . It has before now been borne in upon me that in surroundings of antagonism I may have wrapped myself for protection in a species of misunderstanding, as that other traveller drew closer about him the folds of his cloak the more bitterly the winds and the storm assailed him on his way. But, as with him, when the sun shone upon him in his path, his cloak fell from his shoulders, so I, in the warm glow of your friendship, throw from me all former disguise, and, making no further attempt to hide my true feeling, disclose to you my deep emotion at such unwonted testimony of affection and faith."

This was the only public testimonial he ever received in England, and one of the few public functions at which he assisted. He seldom attended public dinners, those solemn feasts of funeral baked meats by which "the Islander soothes his conscience and purchases public approval." We remember that he did not appear at the first dinner of the Society of Authors, where his place was beside ours—a dinner given to American authors, at which Lowell presided. J. recalls an artists' dinner at which Whistler was seated on one side of the chairman and Charles Keene on the other. Some brilliant person had placed Sir Frederick Wedmore next to Whistler, who had more fun at the dinner than the critic. He rarely was seen in the City, and rarely was asked in Paris. As an outsider, he was never invited to the Academy. Even little private functions, like the Johnson Club, to which J. has taken him, he did not care for. It is so easy to be bored, so difficult to be amused, on such occasions. He preferred not to run the risk.

Of gentle answers that turn not away wrath there were plenty in 1889. At the Universal Exhibition in Paris, Whistler, an American naturally proposed to show with Americans. *The Yellow Buskin* and *The Balcony* were the pictures he selected; he sent twenty-seven etchings, knowing that, in a big exhibition, a few prints make no effect. The official acknowledgment was a printed notice from General Rush C. Hawkins, "Cavalry Officer," Commissioner for the American Art Department: "Sir,—Ten of your exhibits have not received the approval of the jury. Will you kindly remove them?"

Whistler's answer was an immediate journey to Paris, a call on General Hawkins, the withdrawal of all his prints and pictures, to the General's embarrassment. Whistler wrote afterwards to the *New York Herald*, Paris edition: "Had I been properly advised that the room was less than the demand for place, I would, of course, have instantly begged the gentlemen of the jury to choose, from among the number, what etchings they pleased."

Twenty-seven etchings, unless specially invited, were rather a large number to send to any exhibition. He had been already asked to contribute to the British Section, and to it he now took the two pictures and ten prints. Though General Hawkins' action is as incomprehensible as his appointment to such a post, Whistler made a mistake. There is no doubt that, had his seventeen accepted prints remained in the American Section, he would have had a much better show than in the English, where only ten were hung and where, for etching, Seymour Haden, and not Whistler, was awarded a *Grand Prix*. "Whistler's Grievance" got into the papers, and the letters and interviews remain in *The Gentle Art*. If in 1889 he identified himself with the British, it was due solely to the discourtesy, as he considered it, of his countrymen. There was no denial of his nationality, and, though later always invited to show in the British Section of International Exhibitions, he always refused when there was an American Section.

In 1888 the New Gallery took over the played-out traditions of the Grosvenor, but Whistler did not follow to Regent Street. His *Carlyle*, several drawings, and many etchings went to the Glasgow International Exhibition that year, and he was well represented at the first show of the Pastel Society at the Grosvenor. He was more in sympathy with the New English Art Club than any other group of artists. It was then youthful and enthusiastic, most of the younger men of promise or talent belonged, and it might have accomplished great things had its founders been faithful to their original ambition. Whistler was never a member, but he sent a *White Note* and the etching of the *Grande Place, Brussels*, to the exhibition in 1888, and *Rose and Red*, a pastel, in 1889, when he was elected by the votes of the exhibitors to the jury. To the infinite loss of the club he never showed again. In the same year (1889), at the Institute of the Fine Arts at Glasgow, the *Mother* strengthened the impression made by the *Carlyle* the year

before ; there was a show of his work in May at the College of Working Women in Queen Square, London ; and *The Grey Lady* was included in an exhibition at the Art Institution, Chicago, in the fall.

The show at Queen Square was remarkable. It is said to have been "organised by Mr. Walter Sickert, by permission of Miss Goold (head of the College), and opened by Lord Halsbury." There had not been such a representative collection of his work since his exhibition of 1874. The *Mother*, *Carlyle*, *Rosa Corder*, *Irving* were there, many pastels and water-colours, and many etchings of all periods from the Thames Series to the last in Touraine and Belgium. We have never seen a catalogue. We remember how it impressed us when we came to the fine Queen Anne house in the quiet, out-of-the-way square, how indignant we were to find nobody but a solitary man and a young lady at the desk, and how urgently we wrote in the *Star* that, "if there were as many as half a dozen people who cared for good work, they should go at once to see this exhibition of the man who has done more to influence artists than any modern." There is a legend of Whistler's coming one day, taking a picture from the wall and walking away with it, despite the protest of the attendant and the Principal of the College, wishing, so the legend goes, to carry out the theory he was soon to assert that pictures were only "kindly lent their owners." But the story of his making off with it across the square, followed by the college staff screaming "Stop thief!" and being nearly run in by a policeman, is a poor invention. His desire, however, to keep his pictures in his possession, his hope that those who bought them would not dispose of them, was growing, and his disgust when they were sold, especially at increased prices, was expressed in his answer to some one who said, "Staats Forbes tells me that that picture of yours he has will be the last picture he will ever part with." "H'm," said Whistler, who had had later news, "it is the last picture he has."

In March 1890 Whistler moved to No. 21 Cheyne Walk, an old house with a garden at the back, farther down the Embankment, close to Rossetti's Tudor House. It was panelled from the street door to the top. A cool scheme of blue and white decorated the dining-room, where there was one perfect painting over the mantel, and, Mr. Francis James has told us, the *Six Projects* hung for a while on the

walls. The drawing-room on the first floor was turned into a studio, there was a bedroom above, but the rest of the house was empty and bare. From M. Gérard Harry we have an explanation of this bareness :

" I remember a striking remark of Whistler's at a garden-party in his Chelsea house. As he caught me observing some incompletely furnished rooms and questioning within myself whether he had occupied the house more than a fortnight or so : ' You see,' he said, with his short laugh, ' I do not care for definitely settling down anywhere. Where there is no more space for improvement, or dreaming about improvement, where mystery is in perfect shape, it is *finis*—the end—death. There is no hope, nor outlook left.' I do not vouch for the words, but that was certainly the sense of a remark which struck me as offering a key to much of Whistler's philosophy, and to one aspect of his original art."

On September 24, 1890, Mr. Cole, calling at Cheyne Walk, " found him painting some excellent portraits—very strong and fine." What all these were it is difficult to say, though one was the well-known *Harmony in Black and Gold—Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac*, Whistler's fourth portrait of a man in evening dress. Another may have been the second portrait never finished, which Montesquiou described to Edmond de Goncourt, who made a note of it in his *Journal* (July 7, 1891) :

" Montesquiou tells me that Whistler is now doing two portraits of him : one is in evening dress, with a fur cloak over his arm, the other in a great grey cloak with a high collar, and, just suggested, a necktie of a mauve not to be put into words, though his eyes express the colour of it. And Montesquiou is most interesting to listen to as he explains the method of painting of Whistler, to whom he gave seventeen sittings during the month spent in London. The first sketch-in of his subject is with Whistler a fury, a passion : one or two hours of this wild fever and the subject emerges complete in its envelope. Then sittings, long sittings, when, most of the time, the brush is brought close to the canvas but does not touch it, is thrown away, and another taken, and sometimes in three hours not more than fifty touches are given to the canvas, every touch, according to Whistler, lifting a veil from the sketch.

" Oh, sittings ! when it seemed to Montesquiou that Whistler,

by that intentness of observation, was draining from him his life, something of his individuality, and, in the end, he was so exhausted that he felt as if all his being was shrinking away, but happily he discovered a certain *vin de coca* that restored him after those terrible sittings."

J. went only once to No. 21 Cheyne Walk. Then it was to consult Whistler concerning Sir Hubert von Herkomer's publication of photogravures of pen-drawings in *An Idyl*, and description of them as etchings. Whistler received J. in the white-panelled dining-room, where he was breakfasting on an egg. Sickert came in and was at once sent out—with a letter. Whistler felt the seriousness of the offence, and he lent his support to W. E. Henley's *National Observer*, in which the affair was exposed and in which also the Queen was called upon to remove Herkomer from his post as Slade Professor at the University of Oxford.

From this time J. saw Whistler oftener, meeting him in clubs, in galleries, in friends' houses, occasionally at Solferino's, the little restaurant in Rupert Street which was for several years the meeting-place, a club really, for the staff of the *National Observer*. Nobody who ever lunched there on Press day at the Academy, or the New English Art Club, or the New Gallery is likely to forget the talk round the table in the corner. Never have we heard R. A. M.—"Bob"—Stevenson more brilliant, more paradoxical, more inspiriting than at these midday gatherings. Whistler's first encounter with Henley's paper, then edited in Edinburgh, was a sharp skirmish which, though he afterwards became friendly with Henley, he never forgot nor forgave. Henley was publishing a series of articles called *Modern Men*, among whom he included Whistler, "the Yankee with the methods of Barnum." The policy of the *National Observer* was to fight, everybody, everything, and it fought with spirit. But it had no patience with the battles of others. Of Whistler the artist it approved, but not of Whistler the writer of letters, whom it pronounced rowdy and unpleasant. "Malvolio-Macaire" was its name for him. At last, in noticing Sheridan Ford's *Gentle Art*, of which we shall presently have more to say, it continued in the same strain, and a copy of the paper containing the review, "with proud mark, in the blue pencil of office," was sent to Whistler. He answered with a laugh at "the thick thumb of your editorial refinement" pointed "in deprecation of my choice

rowdyism." Two things came of the letter—one amusing, the other a better understanding. Whistler's answer finished with a "regret that the ridiculous 'Romeike' has not hitherto sent me your agreeable literature." Romeike objected; he had sent eight hundred and seven clippings to Whistler: he demanded an apology. Whistler gave it without hesitation: he had never thought of Romeike as a person, and he wrote, "if it be not actionable permit me to say that you really are delightful!!" No one could appreciate the wit, the fun of it all better than Henley, and he was the more eager to meet Whistler. His account of the meeting, when it came about, was coloured by the enthusiasm that made Henley the stimulating person he was. "And we met," he would say, throwing back his great head and laughing with joy, though he gave no details of the meeting. Henley managed to find "the earnest of romance" in everything that happened to him. "And there we were—Whistler and I—together!" he would repeat, as if it were the most dramatic situation that could be imagined.

The bond between them was their love of the Thames. Henley was the first to sing the beauty of the river that Whistler was the first to paint, and when he wrote the verses (*No. XIII.* in *Rhymes and Rhythms*) that give the feeling, the magical charm of the Nocturnes, he dedicated them to Whistler. Big and splendid as a Viking, exuberant, emphatic, Henley was not the type physically to interest Whistler. The sketch of him (made in 1896) is one of Whistler's least satisfactory lithographs, and only six impressions were pulled. But their relations were cordial, and when the *National Observer* was transferred to London and Henley returned with it, Whistler sometimes came to the dinners of the staff at Solferino's. Henley had gathered about him the younger literary men and journalists: Rudyard Kipling, "Bob" Stevenson, J. M. Barrie, Marriott Watson, G. S. Street, Vernon Blackburn, Fitzmaurice Kelly, Arthur Morrison, Charles Whibley, Kenneth Grahame, George W. Steevens. After Mr. Astor bought the *Pall Mall Gazette* its staff was largely recruited from the *National Observer*, and Mr. Henry Cust, the editor, and Mr. Ivan-Muller, the assistant editor, joined the group in the room upstairs. When dinner was over and Henley was thundering at his end of the table, the rest listening, Whistler sometimes dropped in, and the contrast between him and Henley added to the gaiety of the evening: Henley, the "Burly" of Stevenson's

essay on *Talk and Talkers*, "who would roar you down . . . bury his face in his hands . . . undergo passions of revolt and agony"; Whistler, who would find the telling word, let fly the shaft of wit that his eloquent hands emphasised with delicate, graceful gesture. His "Ha ha!" rose above Henley's boisterous intolerance. When "Bob" Stevenson was there—"Spring-Heel'd Jack"—the entertainment was complete. But each of the three talked his best when he held the floor, and we have known Whistler more brilliant when dining alone with us. From Solferino's, at a late hour when Henley, as always in his lameness, had been helped to his cab, Whistler and J. would retire with "Bob" Stevenson and a little group to the Savile, where everything under heaven was discussed by them, Professor Walter Raleigh, Reginald Blomfield, and Charles Furse frequently joining them, and they rarely left until the club was closed. Whistler would, in his turn, be seen to his cab on his way home, and a smaller group would listen to "Bob" between Piccadilly and Westminster Bridge, waiting for him to catch the first morning train to Kew.

Whistler seldom left without some parting shot which his friends remembered, though he was apparently unconscious of the effects of these bewildering little sayings as he returned to his house in Cheyne Walk. There he was often followed by his new friends and often visited by the few "artists" he had not cared to lose, especially Mr. Francis James and Mr. Theodore Roussel. A few Followers continued to flutter at his heels. Portraits of some of those who came to 21 Cheyne Walk are in the lithograph of *The Garden;* Mr. Walter Sickert, Mr. Sidney Starr, Mr. and Mrs. Brandon Thomas. Mr. Walter Sickert had married Miss Ellen Cobden, and she was a constant visitor. So also were Henry Harland, later editor of the *Yellow Book*, and Mrs. Harland; Wolcot Balestier, the enterprising youth who set out to corner the literature of the world, and who, with Mr. S. S. McClure, was bent on syndicating everybody, including Whistler; Miss Carrie Balestier, now Mrs. Rudyard Kipling; an American journalist called Haxton, with a stammer that Whistler adored to the point of borrowing it on occasions, though he never could manage the last stage when words that refused to be spoken had to be spelled. Another was André Raffalovitch, a Russian youth and poet, whose receptions brought together many amusing as well as fantastic elements of London

society. But the most intimate friend he made at this period was Mr. William Heinemann, and this brings us to the great event of 1890, the publication of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*.

CHAPTER XXXIV: "THE GENTLE ART." THE YEAR EIGHTEEN NINETY.

For years Whistler's letters to the papers puzzled the people. George Moore laboured to account for them in *Modern Painting* by an elaborate theory of physical feebleness, and George Moore has been taken seriously in the provinces and America. One glimpse of Whistler at the printing-press, sleeves rolled up showing two strong arms, and the theory and the theorist would have been knocked out. The letters were not an eccentricity; they were not a weakness. From the first, written to the *Athenæum* in 1862, they had one aim, "to make history." Buried in the papers, they were lost; if the history were to be made they must be collected. They were collected and edited as *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies as Pleasingly Exemplified in Many Instances, Wherein the Serious Ones of this Earth, Carefully Exasperated, Have Been Prettily Spurred on to Unseemliness and Indiscretion, While Overcome by an Undue Sense of Right.*

The book, born of years of fighting, was ushered into the world by a fight. The work of collecting and arranging the letters was undertaken by Mr. Sheridan Ford, an American journalist in London. Whistler said that Ford only helped him. Ford said that the idea was his, that he, with Whistler's approval, was collecting and editing the letters for a publication of his own. We give Ford's story and that of one who followed it at the time, Mr. J. McLure Hamilton, and this we are better pleased to do because Whistler misunderstood Mr. Hamilton's part in the matter, and credited him with a malice and enmity that few men could be so incapable of as he. Whistler would never consent to meet him and could not understand why we should not agree in his view of Mr. Hamilton as "a dangerous person." By accident they did meet in our flat. Whistler was dining with us, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton called in the evening. Other people were there, and they simply ignored one another; chance had blundered in its choice of

the moment for the meeting. We think Whistler would have felt the unfairness of his judgment of Mr. Hamilton's conduct could he have read Mr. Hamilton's version which he has sent us :

"In the spring of 1889 I met Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan Ford. Sheridan Ford was writing for the *New York Herald*, and Mrs. Sheridan Ford had been interesting picture-dealers in the work of Swan, Clausen, Melville, and others. Ford had a very strong taste for art, and seemed to be opposed to all forms of trickery, and was engaged on a series of articles which appeared in the *New York Herald*, London edition, upon Whistler and his work. He was also the author of *Art, a Commodity*, a pamphlet widely read both in England and America. He came to me one day, and told me of an idea that he thought could be carried out with advantage to himself and Whistler. He suggested that the letters which Whistler had been publishing from time to time in the Press should be published in book form. The title was to be *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, and was, I understood, Ford's. Whistler and he had talked the matter over, and it was agreed between them that Ford should collect the letters, edit them with remarks of his own, and publish the book for his own profit.

"The work went on for some months, and occasionally Ford would bring me letters that he had unearthed from the newspaper files at the British Museum to read. I was not acquainted with Whistler, but from what Ford told me I understood that Whistler was as much interested in the progress of the book as Ford. The latter seemed to be looking forward with great eagerness to the production of a book which could not fail to amuse the art world.

"One morning Ford came to me at Alpha House in great distress. He brought with him a letter from Whistler requesting him to discontinue the making of the book, and containing a cheque for ten pounds in payment for the trouble that he had had in collecting the materials. The book at that time was almost complete, and the preface written. After a prolonged talk with him upon all the bearings of the case, I concluded that Whistler's change of mind had been determined by the discovery that there would be too much credit and profit lost to him if he allowed Ford to bring out the work, and that probably Mrs. Whistler had suggested to Whistler that it would be a great gain to him if he were to issue the letters himself. Ford asked me what

I would advise him to do. I replied that I personally would not go on with the book, but that if he were careful to omit *all copyright matter* he would be perfectly justified in continuing, after having, of course, returned the cheque to Whistler. I have no doubt that Ford asked the advice of others, for soon he brought me the advance proofs to read, and I spent a great deal of time going over them, sometimes suggesting alterations and improvements. A note from Ford reached me telling me that the book was finished, and asking my permission to dedicate it to me. I wrote, in reply, that I did not wish the work dedicated to me. Ford found a good publisher who was willing to undertake the publication of the work, and, as far as I could see, everything was going on satisfactorily, when one morning Ford called to see me and told me that Whistler had discovered the printer and had threatened to proceed against him if he did not immediately destroy the sheets, and he (Whistler) found and seized the first sewn-up copy (or leaves) with my name on the dedication page, in spite of the refusal I had given.

[The dedication was as follows: "Dedicated to John McLure Hamilton, A Great Painter and a Charming Comrade. In Memory of Many Pleasant Days." The proposed title was *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies. J. McNeill Whistler as the Unattached Writer. With Some Whistler Stories Old and New. Edited by Sheridan Ford. Brentano's. London, Paris, New York, Washington, Chicago,* 1890. Both dedication and title we have seen in Ford's handwriting.]

"This brought at once a letter from Whistler to me, in which he abruptly accused me of assisting Ford in wronging him. I replied in a few words denying his allegations. At this interview Ford's manner was strange, and for several weeks after he was confined to his house, a natural consequence of seeing all his hopes shattered. He had foreseen in the successful production of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* the opening of a happy and profitable career in letters. After his recovery Mr. and Mrs. Ford went away, pursued by the relentless activity of Whistler. In the end, the so-called 'pirated edition,' paper-bound, appeared in Mechlin or some other Continental city and was more or less clandestinely offered for sale in England. Whistler's handsome volume appeared almost simultaneously.

"While these incidents were progressing, I was asked to dine

at the Hogarth Club, and it had evidently been prearranged that I should meet Whistler after dinner in the smoking-room. This was my first introduction to the great master. We talked Art and commonplace, but he never touched upon the subject of the book, and as I was quite sure the meeting had been arranged in order that he might discuss with me Ford's conduct, I could not understand his silence. Our next meeting was at a *conversazione* held at the Grosvenor Galleries, when we both freely discussed together the whole question before Melville, who was displeased at the attitude I took with Whistler. I frankly told him that I thought he had done Ford a great wrong in withdrawing the editorship of the book which rightly belonged to him."

Sheridan Ford, persisting that Whistler had conferred on him the right to publish the collection, announced the simultaneous publication of his book in America and England. The English publishers, Messrs. Field and Tuer, of the Leadenhall Press, supposed that Ford was acting for Whistler when he brought them the MS., which at that time is said to have been called *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler*. The text was set up and cast, the type distributed; they were ready to print when they discovered their mistake. "We then sent for the person in question," they wrote to Messrs. Lewis and Lewis, Whistler's solicitors, "and told him that until he obtained Mr. Whistler's sanction, we declined to proceed further with the work."

Sheridan Ford went to Antwerp, and had the book printed there. Sir George Lewis followed and seized the edition at the printers' on the day of publication, when vans for its distribution were at their door. The two thousand copies were carried off by the *Procureur du Roi*. The matter came before the Belgian Courts in October 1891, M. Edmond Picard and *Maître* Maeterlinck, cousin of Maeterlinck the poet, appearing for Whistler. M. Harry, of the *Indépendance Belge*, described Whistler in the witness-box, with the eyes of a Mephistopheles flashing and sparkling under the thick eyebrows, his manner easy and gay, his French fluent and perfect. He was asked his religion and hesitated. The Judge, thinking to help him, suggested, "A Protestant, perhaps?" His answer was a little shrug, as much as to say, "I am quite willing. You should know. As you choose!" He

was asked his age—even the Belgian reporter respected his objection to having any. Judgment was given for him. Sheridan Ford was sentenced to a fine of five hundred francs or three months' imprisonment; to three thousand francs damages or three months more; to the confiscation of the two thousand copies, and to costs. After the trial Whistler was taken to the cellars of the Palais de Justice, and shown the confiscated copies, stored there with other fraudulent goods, by the law of Belgium destined to perish in dampness and gloom.

The affair has not been forgotten in Belgium—nor has Whistler. One impression has been written for us by M. Edmond Picard, the distinguished Senator, his advocate:

"*En me demandant de parler de l'illustre et regretté Whistler, vous ne désirez certes pas que j'ajoute mon lot à la riche pyramide d'admiration et d'éloges définitivement érigée à sa gloire.*

"*Il ne peut s'agir, dans votre pensée que de ce que je pourrais ajouter de spécial et de pittoresque à la Biographie du Grand Artiste.*

"*Si j'ai beaucoup vu et aimé ses œuvres, je n'ai qu'entrevu son originale personne.*

"*Voici deux traits intéressants qui s'y rapportent.*

"*Il y a quelques années il s'inquiéta d'une contrefaçon qu'un étranger habitant Anvers avait perpétré en Belgique de son curieux livre, 'L'Art charmant de se faire des ennemis.' Je le vis un jour entrer dans mon cabinet et il me dit avec un sourire sarcastique, 'Je souhaiterais que vous fussiez mon avocat dans cette petite affaire parcequ'on m'a dit que vous pratiquez aussi bien que moi l'art charmant de se faire des ennemis.'*

"*Le procès fut gagné à Anvers avec la collaboration de mon confrère, M. Maeterlinck, parent du poète qui honore tant notre pays. On célébra chez lui cette victoire. Quand Whistler, héros de la fête, arriva dans l'hospitalière maison, il s'attardait dans l'antichambre. La bonne qui l'avait reçu vint, avec quelque affarement dire en flamand au salon où l'on attendait, 'Madame, c'est un acteur; il se coiffe devant le miroir, il se pommade, il se met du fard et de la poudre!' Après un assez long intervalle, Whistler parut, courtois, correct, ciré, cosmétiqué, pimpant comme le papillon que rappèle son nom et qu'il mit en signature sur quelques-uns des billets qu'il écrivit alors à ses conseils.*

"*Et voilà tout ce que je puis vous offrir.*

"J'ai demandé à M. Maeterlinck les documents qu'il pouvait avoir conservés de cet épisode judiciaire. Ses recherches ont été vaines. Alors que d'innombrables pièces insignifiantes ont été conservées, le Hasard qui se permet tout à fait disparaître ces précieuses épaves." *

The "Extraordinary Piratical Plot," as Whistler called it in *The Gentle Art*, did not end in Antwerp. Sheridan Ford took the book to Paris, where it was issued by Delabrosse et Cie, 1890, though it is said by Mr. Don C. Seitz to have been printed in Ghent; in Antwerp, Mr. Ford recently told an interviewer—this edition we have seen; while other copies, with the imprint of Frederick Stokes and Brother, were sent to the United States. Sir George Lewis suppressed the Paris edition and prevented the importation of the book into England, and Messrs. Stokes cabled to London that their name was used without their permission. The balance of the edition is stated to have been destroyed by fire. Copies through the post reached England, sent to newspapers for review and to individuals supposed to be interested, among whom we were included. In June 1890 a so-called "second edition" from Paris was received by some papers. Mr. Seitz says that hardly any copies are in existence. Sheridan Ford says that nine thousand were sold. But that was the last heard of it, and Sheridan Ford's book was killed.

Judging from the facts, Whistler treated Ford badly, but Sheridan Ford acted in defiance of Whistler, and in the Paris edition published an article so vile that papers refused to print it. Three versions are given as to the cause of the quarrel. The first is that Mrs. Whistler interfered and told Whistler to take the work over himself; the second is Sheridan Ford's statement that Whistler wished M. Duret to prepare the book; and the third is the suggestion of Mr. Seitz that the difference arose over the insertion of a letter of Oscar Wilde's. As this letter was printed in Whistler's edition, Mr. Seitz's conclusions are of little value and his assertions differ from Sheridan Ford's contemporary tale. Whistler's version, published by Sheridan Ford in the letter dated August 18, 1889, is: "I think, for many reasons, we would do well to postpone the immediate consideration of the proposed publication for a while. At this moment I find myself curiously interested in certain paintings, the production of which might appropriately

* See Appendix at end of volume.

be made anterior to mere literature." We have heard that he was urged to come to this decision by Mr. Theodore Roussel, who told him he ought to prepare the book, pay Sheridan Ford, and get rid of him. Whistler obtained possession of Sheridan Ford's work, or rather of his letters collected by Sheridan Ford, arranged them, commented on them, and published them in his own fashion. Sheridan Ford's book is undistinguished; Whistler's contains on every page evidence of his care in carrying out his ideas of book decoration.

Whistler, who was delighted with Mr. William Heinemann's artistic instinct, sympathy, enthusiasm, and quick appreciation of his intention, gave him the book to publish. From the day their agreement was signed the publisher entered into the matter with all his heart. Whistler's fights were his fights, Whistler's victories his victories. Whistler was flattered by his understanding of things and came daily almost to take out his "publisher, philosopher, and friend," as he described Mr. Heinemann, to breakfast at the Savoy. He would arrive at eleven, when the business man had hardly got into the swing of his morning's work. Was it not preposterous that there should be other books to be prepared, other matters to be thought of, while this great work of art was being born? The Savoy balcony overlooking the Embankment was, at so early an hour, deserted, and there they could discuss, change, and arrange every detail without interruption. Hours were spent often over a single Butterfly, and usually Whistler's pockets were full of gay and fantastic entomological drawings.

Whistler was constantly at the Ballantyne Press, where the book was printed. He chose the type, he spaced the text, he placed the Butterflies, each of which he designed to convey a meaning. They danced, laughed, mocked, stung, defied, triumphed, drooped wings over the farthing damages, spread them to fly across the Channel, and expressed every word and every thought. He designed the title-page; a design contrary to established rules, but with the charm, the balance, the harmony, the touch of personality he gave to everything, and since copied and prostituted by foolish imitators who had no conception of its purpose. Mr. MacCall, of the Ballantyne Press, has told us of his interest and has a proof of it in a collection of Butterflies and proof sheets covered with Whistler's corrections. Here,

too, as everywhere by those he worked with, he is remembered with affection, and the printers were delighted to profit by his suggestions. The cover was in brown, with a yellow back. The title, though attributed to Sheridan Ford, can be traced to Whistler's speech at the Criterion dinner and the gentle answer that turneth not away wrath. The dedication is: "To the rare Few, who, early in Life, have rid Themselves of the Friendship of the Many, these pathetic Papers are inscribed."

The book was published in June 1890 and has gone through eight editions, Messrs. John M. Lowell and Co., and then Messrs. Putnam's Sons, issuing it in America. It met the fate of all his works. The Press received it with the usual smile at Mr. Whistler's eccentricities, and here and there a word of praise and appreciation said with more courage than of old. To the multitude of readers it was a jest; to a saving remnant it was serious, to none more serious than to Whistler, who knew it would live with the writings of Cellini, Dürer and Reynolds.

The Gentle Art is an artistic autobiography. Whistler gave the sub-title *Auto-Biographical* to one section—he might have given it to the whole. He had a way, half-laughing, half-serious, of calling it his Bible. "Well, you know, you have only to look and there it all is in the Bible," or "I am afraid you do not know the Bible as you should," he often said to us in answer to some question about his work or his life. The trial, the pamphlets, *The Ten O'Clock*, the *Propositions*, the letters, the catalogues take their place and appear in their proper sequence, not as disconnected, inconsequent little squibs and the elaborate bids for notoriety they were supposed to be. The book, which may be read for its wit, is really his Manifesto.

He included also the criticisms and comments that had provoked him into print, for his object was to expose the stupidity and ridicule he was obliged to face, so that his method of defence should be understood. To read the book is to wonder the more that there should have been necessity for defence, so simple and right is his theory, so sincere and reverent his attitude. We have spoken of most of the different subjects in it as they appeared. The collection intensifies the effect each made individually. Everything he wrote had the same

end: to show that "art should be independent of all clap-trap; should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear, without confounding this with emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, and the like. All these have no kind of concern with it, and that is why I insist on calling my works 'arrangements' and 'harmonies.'"

It was for the "knowledge of a lifetime" his work was to be valued, he told the Attorney-General in court. In this paragraph, and in this answer, you have the key to *The Gentle Art*. Fault may be found with arguments; facts and methods may be challenged. But analysis, description, technical statement, and explanation are so many proofs of his belief in the independence of art and of his surrender to that untiring devotion which the "goddess" demands of her disciples.

It would seem impossible that his statement of simple truths should have been suspected, were it not remembered that art in England depended mostly on "clap-trap" when Whistler wrote, and that his manner of meeting suspicion was intended to mystify. He took care that his book should be the expression not only of his belief but of his conception of art. Stupidity in critics and public hurt him as much as insincerity in artists, and when confronted with it he was pitiless. Dullness, too, he could not stand. He met it with "joyousness": to be "joyous" was his philosophy of life and art, "where all is fair," and this philosophy to the multitude was an enigma. His letters to the Press are apt to be dismissed as shrill, cheap, thin, not worthy a great artist, still unworthier of his endeavour to immortalise them. It is true that he might have omitted some things from *The Gentle Art*, though the names and ridicule he found for the "Enemies" will stick to them for ever. But Whistler thought "history" would be half made if he did not leave on record both the provocation he received and his gaiety of retaliation. When the battle was won and recognition came he wrote to Atlas from Paris: "We 'collect' no more." *Messieurs les Ennemis* had no longer to fear for their "scalps." Oftener than not the wit is cruel in its sting. We have quoted the "F F F . . . Fool" letter. There are others more bitter, because gayer on the surface, to Tom Taylor, for instance that final disposing of him:

"Why, my dear old Tom, I never *was* serious with you even when you were among us. Indeed, I killed you quite, as who should say without seriousness, 'A rat! A rat!' you know, rather cursorily."

Whistler had the power of expressing himself in words which is rare with artists. He could write, he had style. Literature, no less than art, was to him a "dainty goddess." He worked out his shortest letter as carefully as a portrait or a Nocturne, until all trace of labour in it had disappeared. People, awed by the spectacle of Ruskin wallowing amid the many volumes of *Modern Painters* without succeeding in the end in saying what he wanted, could not believe that Whistler was saying anything that mattered when he said in a few pages what he wanted with no sign of labour. In his notes to *Truth* and the *World*, as in *The Ten O'Clock*, he reveals his knowledge of the Scriptures, while his use of French which displeased his critics, his odd references, his unexpected quotations, are placed with the same unerring instinct as the Butterfly on his canvas. He chose the right word, he made the division of paragraphs effective, punctuation was with him an art. It is difficult to give examples, because there are so many. *The Ten O'Clock* is full of passages that show him at his best, none finer than the often-quoted description of London "when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil." The *Propositions* and *The Red Rag* are as complete, as simple and direct as his prints. The book, as an exposition of his beliefs and doctrines, ranks with Reynolds' *Lectures*; as a chronicle of an artist's adventures, it is as personal and characteristic as the *Memoirs of Cellini*. We have been criticised for devoting so much space to Whistler's wit and his writings, but as a wit and writer Whistler will live. He was a many-sided man, not a lop-sided painter.

The period of the preparation and publication of *The Gentle Art* was one of unimportant quarrels. In each case there was provocation. Of two or three so much was made at the time that they cannot be ignored. One, in 1888, was with Mr. Menpes, who, making no secret of it, has recorded its various stages until the last, when the Follower adopted the Master's decorations and arrangements in his own house. His *Home of Taste* was paragraphed in the papers, and Whistler held him up to the world's ridicule as "the Kangaroo of his country, born

with a pocket and putting everything into it." The affair came to a crisis not long after the *Times* Parnell disclosures,and Whistler wrote to him : " You will blow your brains out, of course. Pigott has shown you what to do under the circumstances, and you know your way to Spain. Good-bye."

Once afterwards, at a public dinner, Whistler saw Mr. Menpes come into the room on Mr. Justin McCarthy's arm : " Ha ha ! McCarthy," he laughed as they passed him. " Ha ha ! You should be careful. You know, Damien died."

In 1890 Augustus Moore, brother of George, was added to the list of " Enemies." The cause was an offensive reference to Godwin, Mrs. Whistler's first husband, in *The Hawk*, an insignificant sheet Moore edited. Whistler, knowing that he would find him at any first-night, went to Drury Lane for the autumn production, *A Million of Money*, and in the foyer hit Moore with a cane across the face, crying, " Hawk ! Hawk ! " There was a scrimmage, and Whistler, as the man who attacked, was requested to leave the house. The whole thing was the outcome of a sense of honour, a feeling of chivalry, which is not now understood in England, though it would have been found magnificent in the days of duels. The comic papers made great fun of the episode, and the serious ones lamented the want of dignity it showed. No one understood Whistler's loyalty and his devotion to the woman he had married.

CHAPTER XXXV : THE TURN OF THE TIDE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-ONE AND EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO.

The world owed him a living, Whistler said, but it was not until 1891 that the world began to pay the debt with the purchase of the *Carlyle* for Glasgow and the *Mother* for the Luxembourg.

While the *Carlyle* was at the Glasgow Institute in 1888, Mr. E. A. Walton and Sir James Guthrie made up their minds to try to keep it for the city. Since the attempt to secure it for Edinburgh the Glasgow School had become a power, and as they proclaimed themselves followers of Whistler, it was only right they should do everything to retain the picture in Glasgow. A petition was presented to the

Glasgow Corporation, signed by a long list of names of influential people, which greatly pleased Whistler, for they included Gilbert, Orchardson, Millais, Walton, Guthrie, and many others. The price asked by Whistler was a thousand guineas, and a deputation from the Corporation came to call on him in London. Whistler told us:

"I received them, well, you know, charmingly, of course. And one who spoke for the rest asked me if I did not think I was putting a large price on the picture—one thousand guineas. And I said, 'Yes, perhaps, if you will have it so!' And he said that it seemed to the Council excessive; why, the figure was not even life-size. And I agreed. 'But, you know,' I said, 'few men are life-size.' And that was all. It was an official occasion, and I respected it. Then they asked me to think over the matter until the next day, and they would come again. And they came. And they said, 'Have you thought of the thousand guineas and what we said about it, Mr. Whistler?' And I said, 'Why, gentleman, why—well, you know, how could I think of anything but the pleasure of seeing you again?' And, naturally, being gentleman, they understood, and they gave me a cheque for the thousand guineas."

What Whistler meant by "life-size" he has explained. "No man alive is life-size except the recruit who is being measured as he enters the regiment, and then the only man who sees him life-size is the sergeant who measures him, and all that he sees of him is the end of his nose; when he is able to see his toes, the man ceases to be life-size."

Before the *Carlyle* went to Glasgow Whistler wished to show it in London, where, except in Queen Square, it had not been seen since the Grosvenor Exhibition of 1877, and it was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery. Mr. D. Croal Thomson, then director of the Gallery, saw that the tide was turning, and suggested offering the *Mother* to the Luxembourg. In Paris there was a sluggish sort of curiosity and the beginning of a sort of appreciation. During the last ten years Whistler had shown at the *Salon* his *Lady Meux*, the *Mother*, *Carlyle*, *Miss Alexander*, *The Yellow Buskin*, *M. Duret*, *Sarasate*, and in 1891 his *Rosa Corder* was in the new *Salon*; but save for the third-class medal awarded the *Mother* in 1883 his pictures received no official

recognition, and while several scarcely known Americans were made full members of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts* he was at first simply an Associate. Many of his smaller works had been seen at different times in the Petit Gallery. At Mr. Croal Thomson's suggestion the *Mother* was sent to Messrs. Boussod Valadon in Paris, and subscriptions for the purchase were opened. Before any amount worth mentioning was subscribed the French Government, on the initiative of M. Georges Clémenceau and by the advice of M. Roger Marx, bought it for the nation. M. Bourgeois, the Minister of Fine Arts, had some doubt as to the possibility of offering for so fine a masterpiece the small price that the nation could afford. But Whistler set him at ease on this point, writing to him that it was for the *Mother*, of all his pictures, he would prefer so "solemn a consecration," and that he was proud of the honour France had shown him. The price paid was four thousand francs. Whistler told Mr. Cole, November 14, 1891, that his pleasure was in the fact of "his painting of his mother being 'unprecedentedly' chosen by the Minister of Beaux-Arts for the Luxembourg," and France that same year bestowed upon him an honour he valued higher than almost any he ever received, by making him Officer of the Legion of Honour. But the choice was not unprecedented, pictures of other American artists having already been purchased, while the honour had already been bestowed upon American artists now forgotten.

The event was celebrated by a reception at the Chelsea Arts Club on the evening of December 19, 1891. Whistler was presented with a parchment of greetings signed by a hundred members as "a record of their high appreciation of the distinguished honour that has come to him by the placing of his mother's portrait in the national collection of France."

Whistler said in reply that he was gratified by this token from his brother artists: "It is right at such a time of peace, after the struggle, to bury the hatchet—in the side of the enemy—and leave it there. The congratulations usher in the beginning of my career, for an artist's career always begins to-morrow."

He promised to remain for long one of the Chelsea artists, a promise Chelsea artists showed no desire to keep him to. He was a member of the Club until he went to Paris. When, later, Mr. (now Sir John)

Lavery proposed him as an Honorary Member, there was not enough enthusiasm to carry the motion. And when, still later, it was further proposed that the Chelsea Arts Club should officially recognise the Whistler Memorial they refused, and the comment of one man was, "What had an English Club to do with a memorial by a Frenchman to a Yankee in London?"

Early in 1892 Mr. Croal Thomson arranged with Whistler for an exhibition of *Nocturnes, Marines, and Chevalet Pieces* to be held at the Goupil Gallery in London, or, as Whistler called it, his "heroic kick in Bond Street." Mr. Croal Thomson says his first idea was to show the portraits only. But he soon found that Whistler wanted to include all the paintings and was going to take the matter in hand, and that he was "only like the fly on the wheel" once the machinery was set in motion.

One reason of the success of the exhibition, which surprised not only Mr. Croal Thomson but all London, was Whistler's care when selecting his pictures to secure variety. The collection was a magnificent refutation of everything that the critics had been saying about him for years. They dismissed his pictures as sketches, and he confronted them with *The Blue Waves, Brown and Silver—Old Battersea Bridge, The Music Room*, which had not been seen in London since the early sixties. They objected to his want of finish and slovenliness in detail, and his answer was the Japanese pictures, full of an elaboration the Pre-Raphaelites never equalled, and finished with an exquisiteness of surface they never attempted. He was told he could not draw, and he produced a group of his finest portraits. He was assured he had no poetic feeling, no imagination, and he displayed the Nocturnes, with the factories and chimneys transformed into a fairyland in the night. He was as careful in arranging the manner in which the pictures should be presented. His letters to Mr. Croal Thomson from Paris, where he spent the greater part of 1892, were minute in his directions for cleaning and varnishing the paintings, and putting them into new frames of his design. Indeed, the correspondence on the subject, which we have seen, is a miracle of thoughtfulness, energy, and method.

Mr. Croal Thomson tells us: "Mr. Whistler laboured almost night and day: he wrote letters to every one of the owners of his works in oil asking loans of the pictures. Some, like Mr. Alexander and all

the Ionides connection, acceded at once, but others made delays, and even to the end several owners declined to lend. On the whole, however, the artist was well supported by his early patrons, and the result was a gathering together of the most complete collection of Mr. Whistler's best works—forty-three pictures in all.

"The arrangement of the pictures was entirely Mr. Whistler's, for although he wished several young artists to come to the Gallery the evening the works were to be hung, through some mischance they did not arrive, and I was therefore alone with Mr. Whistler and received a great lesson in the art of arranging a collection."

In the face of so complete a series, in such perfect condition, and so well hung, criticism was silenced. We remember the Press view, and the dismay of the older critics who hoped for another "crop of little jokes," and the triumph of the younger critics who knew that Whistler had won. The papers, daily, weekly, and monthly, almost unanimously admitted that the old game of ridicule was played out and praised the exhibition without reserve. The rest, headed by Sir Frederick Wedmore, have since been trying to swallow themselves. Mr. Croal Thomson recalls that:

"Mr. Whistler was not present at the private view. He knew that many people would expect to see him and talk enthusiastic nonsense, and he rightly decided he was better away, and I was left to receive the visitors. Some hundreds of cards of invitation were issued, and it seemed as if every recipient had accepted. Crowds thronged the galleries all day, and it is impossible to describe the excitement. I do not know how it fared with the artist and his wife during the day, but about five o'clock in the evening Mr. and Mrs. Whistler came in, though they would not enter the exhibition; they remained in a curtained-off portion of the Gallery near the entrance. One or two of their most intimate friends were informed by me of the presence of the painter, and a small reception was held, for a little while, but, of course, by that time the battle was won, and there were only congratulations to be rendered to the master."

J. was taken into the little curtained-off room, and later there was a triumphal procession to the Arts Club. Whistler declared that even Academicians had been seen prowling about the place lost in admiration, that it needed only to send a season ticket to Ruskin to

make the situation perfect, and that, "Well, you know, they were always pearls I cast before them, and the people were always—well, the same people."

It is said Whistler first intended to print the catalogue without comment or quotation from the Press, but the chance to expose the critics was too good, and previous critical verdicts were placed under the titles of the pictures. Two hundred and fifty copies were printed by Thomas Way, and in a letter to Way's manager, Mr. Morgan, he calls the catalogue "perfect." But he also points out that there are errors, and insists that by no accident or disaster shall any of the first printed batch of two hundred and fifty copies get about, and he further says that he proposes to come to the printing office and destroy them. We know of only four copies, one our own—now in the Library of Congress—of this unbound first edition that have been preserved. The other editions, five in all, are in the usual brown paper covers. As an instance of his care, Mr. William Marchant, then with Goupils', remembers his spending an afternoon over the arrangement of the few words on the cover. In the second edition the word "by" disappeared from the title-page and "Kindly Lent Their Owners" was printed. This was not intentional on Whistler's part, for we possess a letter in which he asks that it may be put back at once, and also that the "Moral" at the end of the catalogue, "Modern *British* (!) art will now be represented in the National Gallery of the Luxembourg by one of the finest paintings due to the brush of an *English artist* (!)," should be credited not to him, but to the *Illustrated London News*. Before the edition was exhausted the "Kindly Lent Their Owners" had become famous, though it did not appear in subsequent editions. But it reappeared when the catalogue was reprinted in *The Gentle Art*. The extracts he quoted were cruel, but the critics had been cruel. The sub-title, "*The Voice of a People*," explains his object in publishing them. The catalogue ended with the quotation from the *Chronique des Beaux-Arts:*

"*Au musée du Luxembourg, vient d'être placé de M. Whistler, le splendide Portrait de Mme. Whistler mère, une œuvre destinée à l'éternité des admirations, une œuvre sur laquelle la consécration des siècles semble avoir mis la patine d'un Rembrandt, d'un Titien, ou d'un Vélasquez.*"

This, in later editions, was followed by the " Moral " duly credited to the *Illustrated London News*.

Before the show closed the pictures were photographed, and twenty-four were afterwards published in a portfolio called *Nocturnes, Marines, and Chevalet Pieces*, by Messrs. Goupil. Whistler designed the cover in brown. There were a hundred sets, each photograph signed by him, published at six guineas, and two hundred unsigned at four guineas.

An immediate result of the exhibition was that sitters came. One of the first was the Duke of Marlborough, who gave him a commission for a portrait and asked him and Mrs. Whistler to Blenheim for the autumn. Whistler wrote the Duke one of his " charming letters," then heard of his sudden death, and said :

" Now I shall never know whether my letter killed him, or whether he died before he got it. Well, they all want to be painted because of these pictures, but why wouldn't they be painted years ago when I wanted to paint them, and could have painted them just as well ? "

And he was besieged by Americans, Whistler said, who were determined " to pour California into his lap," a determination to which he had no objection. His " pockets should always be full, or my golden eggs are addled." He thought it would be " amazing fun " to be rich. Once, driving with Mr. Starr, he said :

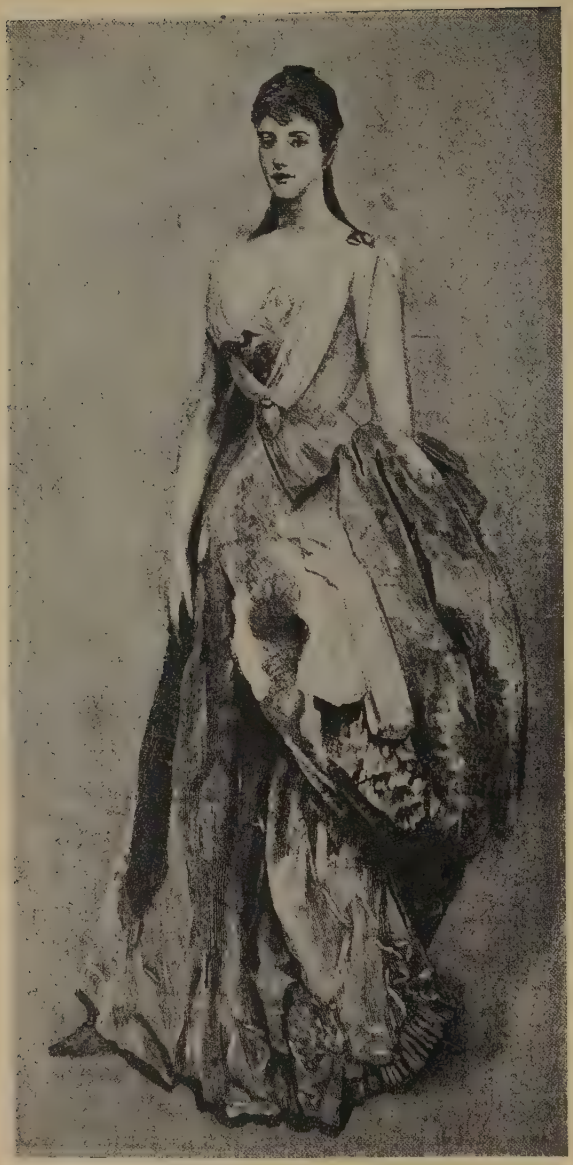
" Starr, I have not dined, as you know, so you need not think I say this in any but a cold and careful spirit : it is better to live on bread and cheese and paint beautiful things than to live like Dives and paint pot-boilers. But a painter really should not have to worry about ' various,' you know. Poverty may induce industry, but it does not produce the fine flower of painting. The test is not poverty, it's money. Give a painter money and see what he'll do ; if he does not paint his work is well lost to the world. If I had had, say, three thousand pounds a year, what beautiful things I could have done."

No one could know better than Mr. Croal Thomson how complete was this success :

" I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the exhibition marked a revolution in the public feeling towards Whistler. His artistic powers were hitherto disputed on every hand, but when it

PORTRAIT OF PABLO SARASATE
ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK
OIL
In the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh

(*See page 223*)



PORTRAIT OF LADY COLIN CAMPBELL
HARMONY IN WHITE AND IVORY
OIL (DESTROYED)
From a photograph lent by Pickford R. Waller, Esq.

(*See page* 262)

was possible for lovers of art to see for themselves what the painter had accomplished the whole position was changed. I will be pardoned, I hope, in stating that whereas up to that time the pictures of Mr. Whistler commanded only a small sum of money, after the exhibition a great number of connoisseurs desired to acquire his works, and therefore their money value immediately increased.

"In the Goupil collection all the pictures were contributed by private owners, and none were offered for sale. I may say in passing that, as a matter of fact, the crowds of visitors were so great that no transaction of any serious kind was carried through in the Gallery between the hanging of the pictures and their dispersal—that is, for nearly five weeks there was practically no record of business.

"But the exhibition altered all this, and it is revealing no secrets to say that within a year after the exhibition was closed I had aided in the transfer of more than one-half of the pictures from their first owners. Mr. Whistler, to whom I always referred before concluding any transaction, came to the conclusion that there was hardly a holder of his pictures in England but who would sell when tempted by a large price. It may be that these owners had become affected by the continual misunderstanding and abuse of Mr. Whistler's works, and that when they were offered double or three times the sum for which they had their pictures insured they thought they had better take advantage of the enthusiasm of the moment. They did not realise that this enthusiasm would continue to enlarge, and that what seemed to them as original purchasers of the pictures to be a great price is only about one-fourth of their present money value.

"It was the artist's wish that a similar exhibition should be held in Paris, but the project fell through, and from more recent experience it would appear as if the London public, sometimes so severely scoffed at by Mr. Whistler, was really more appreciative than the Parisian public, and, therefore, perhaps after all more intelligent."

Whistler sold *The Falling Rocket* for eight hundred guineas, and wished that Ruskin could know that it had been valued at "four pots of paint." The Leyland sale, May 28, 1892, brought the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* and smaller works into the auction-room, and, though the *Princesse* fetched only four hundred and twenty guineas, this was four times as much as Whistler received. What

would he have said to the five thousand Mr. Freer paid for it within a year of his death? The sixty or eighty pounds Mr. Leathart paid Whistler for the *Lange Leizen* increased to six or eight hundred when he sold it. Mr. Ionides had bought *Sea and Rain* for twenty or thirty pounds, and now asked three hundred. Fifty pounds, the price of the *Blue Wave* when Mr. Gerald Potter had it from Whistler, multiplied to a thousand when it was his turn to dispose of it. Fourteen hundred pounds was given by Arthur Studd for *The Little White Girl* and a Nocturne, the two having cost Mr. Potter about one hundred and eighty pounds, and we have been told that Arthur Studd was recently offered six thousand pounds for *The Little White Girl* alone. Whistler resented it when he found that fortunes were being made "at his expense" by so-called friends, and he complained that they were turning his reputation into pounds, shillings, and pence, travelling over Europe and holiday-making on the profits. The previous sentence was written when our book first appeared. During 1918 and 1919 there has been a fabulous increase in the selling price of Whistler's work. We do not know what amount was paid by Mr. Frick for the *Lady Meux*, the *Rosa Corder*, and the *Mrs. Leyland* which he recently purchased. Some of the reports of prices are greatly exaggerated no doubt. A few owners of Whistlers do appreciate them. But nearly all collectors in the United States regard art as they do stocks. They buy for a rise, and appreciate only the monetary value of the works they possess. One of the most striking cases is that of Mr. Howard Mansfield, whom Whistler, during many years, furnished with some of his most interesting prints, aided and directed in their collection, hoping, of course, that they would be left to a museum. But Mr. Mansfield sold his collection for an enormous price, altogether out of proportion to what Whistler received. Surprising statements have been circulated about the sale of pictures. The announcement of the price recently paid for the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* is as incorrect as the title given to the painting, which is simply a small slight sketch and different version of the important subject owned by Mr. Freer. The bigger the lie the more impressive is such a statement concerning the prices asked and obtained—the merit of the work is of secondary importance. This is a fair specimen of American commercial art criticism.

Whistler, after the trade in his work began, suggested that a work of art, when sold, should still remain the artist's property; that it was only "lent its owner." It was now his frequent demand to owners and condition to purchasers that his pictures should be available for exhibition when and where and as often as he pleased. This is illustrated in the following letter which Mr. H. S. Theobald, K.C., writes us:

". . . About 1870 I began to get such of his etchings as I could, and somewhere early in the eighties I became the fortunate possessor of some thirty or forty drawings and pastels through the Dowdeswells. Whistler became aware of my ownership of these, and they sometimes brought him to my house, which was then in Westbourne Square. The pictures, owing to stress of space, hung mostly on the staircase, and Whistler would stand in rapt admiration before them, with occasional ejaculations of 'how lovely,' 'how divine,' and so on. On one of these occasions he asked my wife if she had had her portrait taken. 'But of course not,' he added, 'as I have not painted you.'

"My intercourse with the Master was limited to occasions when he wanted to borrow the pictures. His manner of proceeding was somewhat abrupt. Some morning a person would appear in a four-wheel cab and present Whistler's card, on which was written, 'Please let bearer have fourteen of my pictures.' Sometimes, but not often, there was a preliminary warning from Whistler himself. But though the pictures went easily, it was a labour of Hercules to retrieve them. Once when I went to fetch them at his studio by appointment, after a previous effort, also by appointment, which was not kept, I found the studio locked, but after a search among the neighbours I got the key, and then I found some two or three hundred pictures stacked round the room buried in the dust of ages. Whistler loved his pictures but he certainly took no care of them. On that occasion I remember I took away by mistake in exchange for one of my pictures, a Nocturne that did not belong to me, though it was very like one of mine. You can imagine the Master's winged words when he found this out. I could only cry *mea culpa* and bow my head before the storm. It was the risk to which I feared the pictures were exposed which made me harden my heart."

Whistler was as anxious to keep his pictures out of exhibitions

when for some reason he did not care to have them shown. The large *Three Girls* (*Three Figures, Pink and Grey*, in the London Memorial Exhibition) was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's in the summer of 1891. He had before this tried to get possession of it in order that he might destroy it, and he had offered to paint the portrait of the owner and his wife in exchange. His offer was refused, and, while the picture was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, he wrote a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (July 28, 1891), to explain that it was a painting "thrown aside for destruction." An impudent answer from a critic led to a more explicit statement of his views on the subject:

"All along have I carefully destroyed plates, torn up proofs and burned canvases that the truth of the quoted word shall prevail, and that the future collector shall be spared the mortification of cataloguing his pet mistakes. To destroy, is to remain."

When this picture, with a number of studies for it, was sent to the London Memorial Exhibition, it was found very interesting and it was hung, and we think it fortunate that it was not destroyed. But had the Committee known it was the picture he wished destroyed it never would have been exhibited by the International Society.

In the summer of 1892 Whistler was invited by the Duke of Argyll to contribute to the British Section at the World's Columbian Exposition to be held in Chicago the following year, and the picture mentioned for the purpose was the *Carlyle*. The portrait had been skied in a corner the previous winter at the Victorian Exhibition in the New Gallery, of which Mr. J. W. Beck was Secretary, as he was now of the Fine Arts Committee for Chicago. Whistler wrote to Mr. Beck, sending his "distinguished consideration to the Duke and the President" (Leighton) with the assurance "that I have an undefined sense of something ominously flattering occurring, but that no previous desire on his part ever to deal with work of mine has prepared me with the proper form of acknowledgment. No, no, Mr. Beck! Once hung, twice shy!"

When the letter was sent to the papers and printers made "sky" of the "shy" Whistler was enchanted. Mr. Smalley told the story of the invitation in the *Times*, after Whistler's death, under the impression that he had been invited to show at Burlington House. That Whistler never was invited to show anything there we know, and we

have the further testimony of Sir Fred Eaton, Secretary of the Academy, that "No such proposal as Mr. Smalley speaks of was ever made to Mr. Whistler, and it is difficult to understand on what grounds he made such a statement."

It is an amusing coincidence that this would seem to be confirmed by the fate of a letter addressed to Whistler, "The Academy, England," which, after having gone to the newspaper of that name, was next sent to Burlington House, and, finally, reached Whistler with "Not known at the R.A.," written on the cover. Here was one of the little incidents that Whistler called "the droll things of this pleasant life," and he sent the cover for reproduction to the *Daily Mail* with the reflection:

"In these days of doubtful frequentation it is my rare good fortune to be able to send you an unsolicited official and final certificate of character."

Whistler did not depend upon the British Section at the Chicago Exposition. Americans made up for the official blunders of 1889. Professor Halsey C. Ives, chief of the Art Department, wrote letters that Whistler found most courteous, and everything was done to secure his pictures and prints. He was splendidly represented by *The Yellow Buskin*, the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine*, *The Fur Jacket*, among paintings, and by etchings of every period. The medal given him was the first official honour from his native land, where never before had so representative a collection of his work been seen.

Towards the end of 1892 the appreciation of America was expressed in another form. The new Boston Library was being built, and Messrs. McKim, Meade, and White were the architects. It was determined that the interior should be decorated by the most distinguished American artists. Mr. Sargent and Mr. Abbey were commissioned to do part of the work, and they joined with Mr. McKim and St. Gaudens in trying to induce Whistler to undertake the large panel at the top of the stairs. He made notes and suggestions for the design, which, he told us, was to be a great peacock ten feet high; but the work was put off, and, in the end, nothing came of the first opportunity given him for mural decoration since The Peacock Room.

CHAPTER XXXVI: PARIS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO AND EIGHTEEN NINETY-THREE.

Whistler went to live in Paris again in 1892. Moving from London was a complicated affair, and, during several months, he and Mrs. Whistler and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Whibley, were continually running backward and forward, before they settled in the Rue du Bac. We saw him whenever he came to London and whenever we were in Paris, and, as we were there often, we saw much of him.

A group of artists and art critics, whose appreciation of Whistler had not waited for the turning of the tide, were in the habit of going together to Paris for the opening of the *Salon*. In 1892, R. A. M. Stevenson, Aubrey Beardsley, Henry Harland, D. S. McColl, Charles W. Furse, Alexander and Robert Ross, among others, were with us, and to all it was a pleasure to find Whistler triumphing as he had triumphed earlier in the spring in London. His pictures at the Champ-de-Mars were the most talked about and the most distinguished in an unusually good *Salon*. Many came straight from the Goupil Exhibition. Whistler called it "a stupendous success all along the line," and said that, coming after the Goupil "heroic kick," it made everything complete and perfect. He was pleased also with the fact that he was elected a full *Sociétaire*, and this year a member of the jury.

In the autumn, J., returning to Paris after a long summer in the South of France, found Whistler in the Hôtel du Bon Lafontaine, a house, Whistler said, full of bishops, cardinals, and *monsignori*, and altogether most correct, to which he had moved from the Foyot, inhabited by Senators, after a bomb had exploded in the kitchen window. J. says:

"He was not too comfortably established, in one or two small rooms. He was full of the apartment in the Rue de Bac, which I was taken to see, though there was nothing to see but workmen and packing-boxes. In the midst of the moving, he was working, and one day I found him in his bedroom with Mallarmé, whose portrait in lithography he was drawing, and there was scarcely room for three. This portrait is the frontispiece to Mallarmé's *Vers et Prose*.

"It was the first time I had ever seen Whistler working on a litho-

graph. He had great trouble with this portrait, which he did more than once, not altogether because, as M. Duret says, he could not get the head right, but because he was trying experiments with paper. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with the mechanical grained paper which he had used for the *Albermarle* and the *Whirlwind* prints, and he was then afraid of trusting to the post the paper that Way was sending him. He had found at Belfont's or Lemercier's some thin textureless transfer paper, thin as tissue paper, which delighted him, though it was difficult to work on. When he was doing the Mallarmé, he put the paper down on a roughish book cover. He liked the grain the cover gave him, for it was not mechanical, and, when the grain seemed to repeat itself, he would shift the drawing, and thus get a new surface. I do not know whether he used this thin paper to any extent, but he said he found it delightful, if difficult, to work on. He used that afternoon a tiny bit of lithographic chalk, holding it in his fingers, and not in a crayon-holder as lithographers do.

"The next day, he took me to the printers, Belfont's and Lemercier's, where he introduced me to M. Duchâtel and M. Marty, who was preparing *L'Estampe Originale*, devoting himself to the revival of artistic lithography in France. As I remember, the talk was technical, when not of the wonders of the apartment in the Rue du Bac—where 'Peace threatens to take up her abode in the garden of our pretty pavilion,' Mr. Starr quotes Whistler as saying—and the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, which I did not see until later on. He was also planning his colour lithographs, and he explained to me his methods, though very few colour-prints were made until the next year. He also told me what he thought of printing etchings in colour—that it was abominable, vulgar, and stupid. Good black or brown ink, on good old paper, had been good enough for Rembrandt, it was good enough for him, and it ought to be good enough in the future for the few people who care about etching. To-day, when the world is swamped with the childish print in colour and the preposterous big copper plate, it may be well to remember Whistler's words. His reason for rejecting the etching in colour is as simple and rational as his reason for making the lithograph in colour. Lithography is a method of surface printing; the colour, rolled on to the surface of the stone, is merely rubbed on to, and scrapped off on, the

paper. In etching or engraving, the colour is first hammered into the engraved plate with a dabber and then forced out by excessive pressure, fatal to any but the strongest or purest of blacks and browns ; and colours, whether printed from one plate or a dozen, must have the freshness, the quality, squeezed out of them."

He was back in London at the end of December (1892) eating his Christmas dinner with his future brother-in-law. He stayed only a few days, but long enough to arrange to show *Lady Meux : White and Black* in the first exhibition of the Portrait Painters at the Grafton Gallery, early in 1893, and a number of his Venice etchings with the destroyed plates at the Fine Art Society's.

" We were again in Paris for the *Salon* of 1893, and found Whistler living in the Rue du Bac. Beardsley, MacColl, and ' Bob ' Stevenson were with us. MacColl and I went to see Whistler in the new studio. It was at the top of one of the highest buildings in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, No. 86. As the *concierge* said, in directing visitors, *' On ne peut pas aller plus loin que M. Vistlaire ! '* The climb always seemed to me endless, and must have done much harm to Whistler's weak heart, though benches were placed on some of the landings where, if he had time, he could rest. When we got to the sixth storey MacColl knocked. There was a rapid movement across the floor, and the door was opened a little. Whistler held his palette and brushes between himself and us, and there were excuses of models and work. But MacColl felt the brushes, and they were dry, and so we got in.

" The studio was a big, bare room, the biggest studio Whistler ever had. A simple tone of rose on the walls, a lounge, a few chairs, a white-wood cabinet for the little drawings and prints and pastels ; the blue screen with the river, Chelsea church, and the gold moon ; two or three easels, nothing on them ; rows and rows of canvases on the floor with their faces to the wall ; in the further corner a printing press—rather a printing shop—with inks and papers on shelves ; a little gallery above, a room or two opening off ; a model's dressing-room under it, and in front, when you turned, the great studio window, with all Paris toward the Pantheon over the Luxembourg gardens. There was another little room or entrance-hall at the top of the stairs, and opposite another, a kitchen. On the front was a balcony with flowers.

ANNABEL LEE

PASTEL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 280)

THE CONVALESCENT

WATER-COLOUR

In the possession of Dr. J. W. MacIntyre

(*See page 274*)

"Carmen, his model, was there, and while he showed us some of his work she got breakfast, and we stayed a good part of the day. Mrs. Whistler came up later. I think she breakfasted with us. I have no recollection of what he talked about. But I am sure it was of what they had been saying in London, of what they were saying in Paris, of what he was doing. That is what it always was. We were all asked to lunch the following Sunday at the house.

"The apartment, No. 110 Rue du Bac, was on the right-hand side, just before you reached the *Bon Marché*, going up the street, from the river. You went through a big *porte cochère* by the *concierge's* box, down a long, covered tunnel, then between high walls, until you came to a courtyard with several doors, a bit of an old frieze in one place and a drinking-fountain. Whistler's door was painted blue, with a brass knocker. I do not suppose that then there was another like it in Paris. Inside was a little landing with three or four steps down to the floor a few feet lower than the courtyard. This room contained nothing, or almost nothing, but some trunks (which, as in his other houses, gave the appearance of his having just moved in, or being just about to start on a journey) and a settee, always covered with a profusion of hats and coats. Opposite the entrance a big door opened into a spacious room, decorated in simple, flat tones of blue, with white doors and windows, furnished with a few Empire chairs and a couch, a grand piano, and a table which, like the blue matting-covered floor, was littered with newspapers. Once in a while there was a picture of his on the wall. For some time, the *Venus* hung or stood about. There were doors to the right and left, and on the far side, a glass door opened on a large garden, a real bit of country in Paris. It stretched away in dense undergrowth to several huge trees. Later, over the door, there was a trellis designed by Mrs. Whistler, and there were flowers everywhere. 'In his roses he buried his troubles,' Mr. Wuerpel writes of the garden, and there were many birds, among them, at one time, an awful mocking-bird, at another a white parrot which finally escaped, and, in a temper, climbed up a tree where no one could get it, and starved itself to death to Whistler's grief. At the bottom of the garden were seats. The dining-room was to the right of the drawing-room. It was equally simple in blue, only there was blue and white china in a cupboard and a big dining-table, round which were more Empire

chairs and in the centre a large, low blue and white porcelain stand, on it big bowls of flowers, over it, hanging from the ceiling, a huge Japanese something like a birdcage.

" From Paris, in May, I went down to Caen and Coutances, coming back a few weeks later. Beardsley was still in Paris, or had returned, and we were both stopping at the Hôtel de Portugal et de l'Univers, then known to every art student. Wagner was being played at the Opera, almost for the first time. Paris was disturbed, there were demonstrations against Wagner, really against Germany. We went, Beardsley wild about Wagner and doing, I think, the drawing of *The Wagnerites*. He had come over to get backgrounds in the rose arbours and the dense alleys of the Luxembourg gardens, where Whistler had made his lithographs. Coming away from the Opera, we went across to the Café de la Paix at midnight. The first person we saw was Whistler. He was with some people, but they left soon, and we joined him. Beardsley also left almost at once, but not before Whistler had asked us to come the next Sunday afternoon to the Rue de Bac. Then, for the first time, I learned what he thought of ' æstheticism ' and ' decadence.'

" ' Why do you get mixed up with such things ? Look at him ! He's just like his drawings, he's all hairs and peacock's plumes—hairs on his head, hairs on his fingers' ends, hairs in his ears, hairs on his toes. And what shoes he wears—hairs growing out of them ! '

" I said, ' Why did you ask him to the Rue du Bac ?' ' Oh—well —well—well ! ' And then it was late, or early, and the last thing was, ' Well, you'll come and bring him too.'

" Years later, in Buckingham Street, Whistler met Beardsley, and got to like not only him, as everybody did, but his work. One night when Whistler was with us, Beardsley turned up, as always when he went to see anyone, with his portfolio of his latest work under his arm. This time it held the illustrations for *The Rape of the Lock*, which he had just made. Whistler, who always saw everything that was being done, had seen the *Yellow Book*, started in 1894, and he disliked it as much as he then disliked Beardsley, who was the art editor ; he had also seen the illustrations to *Salomé*, disliking them too, probably because of Oscar Wilde ; he knew many of the other drawings, one of which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, was more or less a reminiscence

of Mrs. Whistler, and he no doubt knew that Beardsley had made a caricature of him which a Follower carefully left in a cab. When Beardsley opened the portfolio and began to show us *The Rape of the Lock*, Whistler looked at them first indifferently, then with interest, then with delight. And then he said slowly, 'Aubrey, I have made a very great mistake—you are a very great artist.' And the boy burst out crying. All Whistler could say, when he could say anything, was 'I mean it—I mean it—I mean it!'

"On the following Sunday Beardsley and I went to the Rue du Bac, Beardsley in a little straw hat like Whistler's. Whistler was in the garden and there were many Americans, and Arsène Alexandre and Mallarmé, some people from the British Embassy, and presently Mr. Jacomb Hood came, bringing an Honourable Amateur, who asked the Whistlers, Beardsley, and myself to dinner at one of the *cafés* in the Champs-Elysees. As we left the Rue du Bac, Whistler whispered to me, 'Those hairs—hairs everywhere!' I said to him, 'But you were very nice and, of course, you'll come to dinner.' And, of course, he did not.

"I was working in Paris, making drawings and etchings of Notre-Dame. I was in one of the high old houses of lodgings and studios, with cabmen's *cafés* and restaurants under them, on the Quai des Grands Augustins. I had gone there because of the view of the Cathedral. Most of the time I was at work up among the Devils of Notre-Dame, using one of the towers as a studio by permission of the Government and the Cardinal-Archbishop. One morning—it was in June—I heard the puffing and groaning of someone climbing slowly the endless winding staircase, and the next thing I saw was Whistler's head on the stairs. When he got his breath and I had got over my astonishment, I began to ask why he had come, or he began to explain the reason. He had learned where I was staying, and he said he had been to the hotel, which, was, well! I think it reminded him of his days *au sixième*, for that was the floor I was on. He left a note written on the *buvette* paper, in which he said, 'Jolly the place seems to be!' After he had climbed up to my rooms, the *patron* told him where he possibly would find me, and then the people at the foot of the tower said I was up above.

"He told me why he had come up. He was working on a series of etchings of Paris. Some were just begun, others ready to bite, but a

number ought to be printed, and would I help him ? I was pleased, and I said I would. I took him about among the strange creatures that haunt the place, introduced him to the old keeper with his grisly tales of suicides and of sticking to the tower through the Commune, even when the church was on fire, and showed him the awful bell that, at noon, suddenly crashed in our ears, the uncanny cat that perched on crockets and gargoyles, tried to catch sparrows with nothing below her, and made from one parapet to another flying cuts over space when visitors came up. But he did not like it, and was not happy until we were seated in the back room of a restaurant across the street. He talked about the printing, saying that I could help him, and he could teach me.

" Next morning I was at the Rue du Bac at nine. After I had waited for what seemed hours, and had breakfasted with him and Mrs. Whistler and we had a cigarette in the garden, where there was an American rocking-chair for him—well, after this it was too late to go to the studio. He brought out some of the plates which he had been working on—the plates of little shops in the near streets—and we looked at them, and that was all. So it went on the next day, and the next, until on the third or fourth things came to a head, and I told him that charming as this life was, either we must print or I must go back to my drawing. In five minutes we were in a cab on our way to the studio. He understood that, much as I admired his work and appreciated him, I could not afford to pay for this appreciation and admiration with my time. From the moment this was plain between us, there was no interruption to our friendship for the rest of his life.

" We set to work. He peeled down to his undershirt with short sleeves, and I saw in his muscles one reason why he was never tired. He put on an apron. The plates, only slightly heated, if heated at all, were inked and wiped, sometimes with his hand, at others with a rag, till nearly clean, though a good tone was left. He painted the proofs on the plate with his hand. I got the paper ready on the press and pulled the proof, he inking and I pulling all the afternoon. As each proof came off the press, he looked at it, not satisfied, for they were all weak, and saying ' we'll keep it as the first proof and it will be worth something some day.' Then he put the prints between sheets of blotting-paper, and that night or the next, after dinner, trimmed them

with scissors and put them back between the folded sheets of blotting-paper which were thrown on the table and on the floor. Between the sheets the proofs dried naturally and were not squashed flat.

"The printing went on for several days, he getting more and more dissatisfied, until I found an old man, Lamour, at the top of an old house in the Rue de la Harpe, who could reground the plates. But Whistler did not rebite them and never touched them until long after in England.

"A number of plates had not been bitten and one hot Sunday afternoon he brought them into the garden at the Rue du Bac. A chair was placed under the trees and on it a wash-basin into which each plate was put. Instead of pouring the diluted acid all over the plate in the usual fashion drops were taken from the bottle on a feather, and the plate painted with acid. The acid was coaxed, or rather used as one would use water-colour, dragged and washed about. Depth and strength were got by leaving a drop of acid on the lines where they were needed. There was a little stopping-out of passages where greater delicacy was required; when there was any, the stopping-out varnish was thinned with turpentine, and Whistler, with a camel's-hair brush, painted over the parts that did not need further biting. To me, it was a revelation. Sometimes he drew on the plate. Instead of the huge crowbar used by most etchers he worked with a perfectly balanced, beautifully designed little needle three or four inches long, made for him by an instrument-maker in Paris. He always carried several in a little silver box. The ground on all the plates was bad and came off, and the proofs he pulled afterwards in the studio were not at all what he wanted. These were almost the last plates he etched.

"He was not painting very much, few people came to the studio, and he went out little. No one was in the Rue du Bac but Mrs. Whistler for a while, and there were complications with the servants and others—how people who kept such hours, or no hours, could keep servants would have been a mystery had not servants worshipped him. Almost daily the *petit bleu* asking me to dinner would come to me. Or Whistler would appear in the morning, if I had not been to him the day before. In those early June days I seldom met anyone at the house and we never dressed for dinner, possibly because I had no dress clothes with me; he would insist on my coming, telling me not to mind the stains or the

inkspots! One evening in the garden with them I found a little man, a thorough Englishman in big spectacles, with a curious sniff, who was holding a hose and watering the plants. He was introduced to me as Mr. Webb, Whistler's solicitor, though in the process we came near being drenched by the wobbling hose. It was that evening I first heard the chant of the missionary brothers from over the great wall. A bell sounded, and as the notes died away a wailing chant arose, went on for a little, then died away as mysteriously as it came. Always, when it did come, it hushed us. At dinner we should be cosy and jolly, Whistler had said in asking me, and we were, and it was arranged that we should go the next day to Fontainebleau.

"They called for me at the hotel in the morning. We drove to the Lyons station, Whistler, his wife, Mr. Webb, and I. And Whistler had the little paint-box which always went with him, though on these occasions it was the rarest thing that he ever did anything, and we got to Fountainebleau. We lunched in a garden. We didn't go to the palace, but drove to Barbizon, stopping at Siron's, through the forest. I don't think the views or the trees interested him at all. He was quiet all the way, but no sooner were we back than we must hunt for 'old things': 'here was a palace and great people had lived here, there might be silver, there might be blue and white, though really, now, you know, you can find better blue and white, and cheaper silver, under the noses of the Britons in Wardour Street than anywhere.' We did not find any blue and white, or silver. But there were three folio volumes of old paper, containing a collection of dried leaves, which we bought and shared, and they were to him more valuable than the palace and the Millet studio, which we never saw.

"It was late when we got back. The servants had gone to bed, and Marguery's and the places where he liked to dine were shut. So we bought what we could in the near shops and sat down in the Rue du Bac to eat the supper we had collected. After we had finished I witnessed his and Mrs. Whistler's wills, which Mr. Webb had brought with him from London, and for this the long day had been a preparation.

"If I did not always accept Whistler's invitations he would reproach me as an awful disappointment and a bad man. If I did not go to the dinner, to which I was bidden at an hour's notice, he would tell me afterwards of the much cool drink and encouraging refreshment he

had prepared for me. He always asked me to bring my friends. Mr. J. Fulleylove had come over to 'do' Paris and I took him to the Rue du Bac; '*les Pleins d'Amour*,' Whistler called him and Mrs. Fulleylove, whose eyes he was always praising. They were working at St. Denis and so was I, and one day Whistler and Mrs. Whistler came in the primitive steam tram that starts from the Madeleine to see the place. We lunched—badly—and he was bored with the church, though he had brought lithograph paper and colours to make a sketch of it.

"One Sunday Mr. E. G. Kennedy posed in the garden for his portrait on a small canvas or panel, and all the world was kept out. I had never before seen Whistler paint. He worked away all afternoon, hissing to himself, which, Mrs. Whistler said, he did only when things were going well. If Kennedy shifted—there were no rests—Whistler would scream, and he worked on and on, and the sun went down, and Kennedy stood and Whistler painted, and the monks began their chant, and darkness was coming on. The hissing stopped, a paint-rag came out, and, with one fierce dash, it was all rubbed off. 'Oh, well,' was all he said. Kennedy was limbered up and we went to dinner.

"After that, almost every night we dined together through that lovely June, either with him in the Rue du Bac, or he came with Kennedy or me to Marguery's or La Pérouse—once to St. Germain—or somewhere that was delightful.

"The summer was famous in Paris for the 'Sarah Brown Students' Revolution,' the row that grew out of the *Quat'z Arts* Ball. Whistler did not take the slightest interest in the demonstrations, in fact, did not believe they were taking place, though I used to bring him reports of the doings which culminated on July 4, my birthday, when he was to have given me a dinner at Marguery's. I told him the streets of the Quarter were barricaded and full of soldiers, but though he ridiculed the whole affair, he decided to dine at home and to put off by telegram the dinner he had ordered. I went round to the Boulevard St. Germain to send the wire and found it barred with soldiers and police, and the entire boulevard, as far as one could see, littered with hats and caps, sticks and umbrellas. There had been a cavalry charge and this was the result. We dined merrily, but Kennedy and I left early. There was a great deal of rioting through the night, but that was the end of it.

"Mrs. Whistler had not been well, and they suddenly made up their minds to go to Brittany, or Normandy, or somewhere on the coast. It was not altogether a successful journey. Nature had gone back on him, he wrote me, probably because of his exposure of her 'foolish sunsets'; the weather was for tourists, the sea for gold-fish in a bowl—the studio was better than staring at a sea of tin. And the terrible things they had eaten in Brittany made them ill. But the lithographs at Vitré were made, also the *Yellow House*, *Lannion*, and the *Red House*, *Paimpol*—his first elaborate essays in colour.

"Only a few impressions of the *Yellow House* were ever pulled owing to some accident to the stone. One of these I wanted to buy. Whistler heard of it. 'Well, you know, very flattering, but altogether absurd,' he told me, and the print came with an inscription and the Butterfly."

CHAPTER XXXVII: PARIS CONTINUED. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-THREE and EIGHTEEN NINETY-FOUR.

After this summer, we both saw still more of Whistler whenever we were in Paris. At the Rue du Bac we were struck by the few French artists at his Sunday afternoons and the predominance of Americans and English. It seemed to us that French artists might have been more cordial and the French nation more sensible of the fact that a distinguished foreign artist had come to France. During his life at least one or two Americans, one a rich amateur, were made Commanders of the Legion of Honour, while he remained an Officer. Others were made foreign Members of the Academy of Fine Arts, but this, the highest honour for artists in France, was never offered to him, nor was he elected to International Juries.

With a few French and foreign artists his relations were friendly: Boldini, Helleu, Puvis de Chavannes, Rodin, Alfred Stevens, Aman-Jean; but the greater number were content to express their appreciation at a distance. Mrs. Whistler spoke little French, and few French artists speak any English. The men whom Whistler saw most were not painters. Viélé-Griffin, Octave Mirbeau, Arsène Alexandre, the Comte de Montesquiou, Rodenbach came to the Rue du Bac. Old friends,

Drouet and Duret, were sometimes there, though not often—his intimacy with them and Oulevey was not really renewed until after Mrs. Whistler's death. But of all who came, none endeared himself so much to Whistler as Stéphane Mallarmé, poet, critic, friend, admirer. Once, at Whistler's suggestion, he visited us in London, and, looking from our windows to the Thames, declared he could understand Whistler better. Official people strayed in from the Embassies, mostly English. American authors and American collectors appeared on Sundays. Mr. Howells, once or twice, came with his son and his daughter, of whom Whistler made a lithograph. Journalists, English and American, wandered in. And English and American artists came, or tried to come, in crowds. The younger men of the Glasgow School, James Guthrie and John Lavery, were welcomed. Then there were the Americans living in Paris: Walter Gay, Alexander Harrison, Frederick MacMonnies, Edmund H. Wuerpel, John W. Alexander, Humphreys Johnston, while Sargent and Abbey rarely missed an opportunity of calling at the Rue du Bac.

Whistler was hardly less cordial to students. Milcendeau has told us how he took his work—and his courage—with him and went to Whistler, but, reaching the door, stood trembling at the thought of meeting the Master and showing his drawings. As soon as Whistler saw the drawings his manner was so charming—as if they were just two artists together—that fear was forgotten, and Whistler proved his interest by inviting Milcendeau to send the drawings to the International. Whistler met American and English students not only at home, but at the American Art Association in Montparnasse, then a bit of old Paris—a little white house with green shutters, which the street had long since left on a lower level, and at the back a garden where, under the great trees, the cloth was laid in summer; just the house to please Whistler. He sometimes went to the club's dinners and celebrations. At one dinner on Washington's Birthday, after professional professors and popular politicians had delivered themselves, he was finally and rather patronisingly asked to speak by the President, who was either an ambassador or a dry-goods storekeeper, the usual patron of American art and supporter of American art institutions. Whistler said: "Now, as to teaching. In England it is all a matter of taste, but in France at least they tell you which end of the brush to stick in your mouth."

Mr. MacMonnies remembers another evening: "A millionaire friend of Whistler's and mine spoke to me of giving a dinner to the American artists in Paris, or rather to Whistler, and inviting the Paris American artists. I dissuaded him, by saying they all hated one another and would pass the evening more cheerfully by sticking forks into one another under the table if they could. Better to invite all the young fry—the American students. He gladly went into it. You can imagine the wild joy of the small fry, who had, of course, never met Whistler. Some got foolishly drunk, others got bloated with freshness, but they all had a rare time, and Whistler, who sat at the head, more than any, and he was delightfully funny. The millionaire was enchanted, and also a distinguished American painter, who sat opposite to Whistler and who was much respected by the youth. At one pause Whistler said, 'I went to the Louvre this morning'—pause, all the youths' faces wide open, expecting pearls of wisdom and points—'and I was amazed'—pause; everybody open-eared—'to see the amazing way they keep the floors waxed!'"

There is a story that one day at lunch-time he went into the court-yard of the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* and walked slowly round, only to be followed in a few minutes by a single line of students, each carrying a mahlstick as he carried his cane, and as many as had them wearing two *sous* pieces for eye-glasses. He stopped and looked at the statues he wanted to see and they stopped and looked, and they followed him, until the circuit of the court was made, when they bowed each other out, and it was not till long after that they learned who he was. American students, if not so filled with their own sense of humour, are said to have mobbed him on one occasion when he went to a *crémerie*, upsetting tables and chairs to see him.

Mr. Walter Gay, who was much with Whistler during these years, gives us his impressions:

"I first knew Whistler in the winter of '94, when he was established in Paris, with the recently married Mrs. Whistler, in his apartment of the Rue du Bac. The marriage was a happy one; she appreciated fully his talent, he adored her, and when she died a few years later was crushed at her loss. In spite of the great influence exercised by Whistler on contemporary art, he was never lionised in Paris as he had been in London; Paris is not a place for lions, there are already too many

local celebrities. Perhaps one of the reasons why the French artists held aloof from Whistler was Mrs. Whistler's very British attitude towards the nation. Once at a dinner of French artists given at our house in honour of Whistler, Mrs. Whistler expressed the most Gallophobe sentiments, complaining loudly of the inhospitality of the French towards her husband. Although sixty years when I knew him, he had the enthusiasm and energy of early years. His handsome grey-blue eyes sparkled with the fire of youth—they were young eyes in an old face. I think it strange that no one ever seems to emphasise his singular beauty. Not only were his features finely cut, but the symmetry of his figure, hands, and feet, retained until late in life, was remarkable; in youth he must have been a pocket Apollo. His conversational powers were extraordinary—he had a Celtic richness of vocabulary. . . . He was supersensitive to criticism. Those who were either indifferent or antipathetic to him, his imagination instantly transformed into hidden enemies. That weakness of the artistic temperament, *la folie de la persécution*, was deeply rooted in his nature. . . .

"No one can realise, who has not watched Whistler paint, the agony his work gave him. I have seen him after a day's struggle with a picture, when things did not go, completely collapse as from an illness. His drawing cost him infinite trouble. I have known him work two weeks on a hand, and then give it up discouraged. . . . My last interview with Whistler took place in the spring of 1903, in London, about two months before his death. Hearing that he was far from well, I went to see him, and found that the rumour was only too well grounded. I spent the afternoon with him; he was singularly gentle and affectionate, and clung to me pathetically as though he too realised that it was to be our last meeting in this world.

"Whatever his detractors may charge against him, it seems to me that Whistler's faults and weaknesses sprang from an unbalanced mentality; he was a *déséquilibré*, the common defect of great painters. The unusual combination of artistic genius, literary gifts, and social attractions which made up Whistler's personality was unique; there was never anybody like him. And there is another quality of his which must not be forgotten in the summing up of his character; underneath all his vagaries and eccentricities one felt that indefinable yet unmistakable being—a gentleman."

Mr. Alexander Harrison shows a different side of Whistler: "My meetings with him were frequent and friendly. On one occasion, in a moment of excitement, I had the audacity to tell him that I felt he ought to have acted differently *vis-à-vis* a jury of reception. His eyes flamed like a rattlesnake's and I apologised, but insisted, and than dodged a *little*. I afterwards realised that my naïve frankness had not lowered me in his esteem, as to the last he was nice to me, having understood that my admiration for his work was no greater than my affectionate regard for him. I have never known a man of more sincere and genuine impulse in ordinary human relations."

Now that Whistler was established for life, as he hoped, in a fine studio, he was making up for the first unsettled years after his marriage. He began a number of large portraits in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. In 1893, Mr. A. J. Eddy, known, we believe, to fame and Chicago as "the man Whistler painted," asked Whistler to paint his portrait. He could stay in Paris only a few weeks, and Whistler liked his American frankness in saying that his portrait must be done by a certain date, and, though unaccustomed to be tied to time, Whistler agreed. His description of Mr. Eddy was, "Well, you know, he is the only man who ever did get a picture out of me on time, while I worked and he waited!" Mr. Eddy writes of a sitter, no doubt himself, who was with Whistler "every day for nearly six weeks and never heard him utter an impatient word; on the contrary, he was all kindness." And Mr. Eddy describes Whistler painting on in the twilight until it was impossible to distinguish between the living man and the figure on the canvas. He recalls the memory of those "glorious" days spent in the studio, of the pleasant hour at noon when painter and sitter breakfasted there together, of the long sittings, and the dinner after at the Rue du Bac, or in one of the little restaurants where no Parisian was more at home than Whistler. But steadily as the work went on, the picture was not sent to Chicago until the following year. Mr. J. J. Cowan, whose portrait dates from this time, tells us that for *The Grey Man*, a small full-length, he gave sixty sittings, averaging each three to four hours. He, like Whistler, was not in a hurry, but, unlike Whistler, he eventually got tired, and a model was called in and posed in Mr. Cowan's clothes. The last sittings were in London, three years after. Even then Whistler wrote Mr. Cowan that the head needed

just the one touch, with the sitter there, so that perfection might be assured. Another portrait was of Dr. Davenport of Paris.

The portraits of women were more numerous, and they promised to be as fine as those done in the seventies and eighties. The work was interrupted by the tragedy of Whistler's last years, and the more important were never completed. For one, Miss Charlotte Williams, of Baltimore, sat, but the painting disappeared, and only the rare lithograph of her remains. Another lost portrait was a large full-length of Miss Peck, of Chicago, now Mrs. W. R. Farquhar, which we saw in many stages, and at last, as it seemed to us, finished. She was painted standing, in evening dress, with her long white, green-lined cloak thrown back a little, as he had painted Lady Meux. It was full of the charm of youth, and the colour was a harmony in silver and green. Miss Kinsella, a third American girl who posed in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and in Fitzroy Street, secured her portrait after Whistler's death. We remember it in the Fitzroy Street studio, when it was so perfect that one more day's work would ruin it. In no other did he ever paint flesh with such perfection. Face and neck had the golden tone of Titian, with a subtlety of modelling beyond the Venetian's powers, for in his later years it was to surpass the Venetians he was trying. One day when E. went to the studio he had just scraped down neck and bust, for no reason except that he could not get the hand to come right with the rest. It was to be lovelier than ever, he said. It was never repainted. It remains but a shadow of its loveliness. When M. Rodin saw it at the London Memorial Exhibition, he praised neck and bust to J. as " a beautiful suggestion of lace," so beautiful in tone and modelling it still is. That posing for Whistler was difficult we know from these ladies and many of his other sitters, as well as from our experience. Over and over, when he wanted to work on their portraits, he would telegraph to the last address he happened to have, though sometimes the telegrams did not reach them till weeks after in some distant part of the world. The fact that his sitters were not always waiting for him not only upset him temporarily, but sometimes stopped the subject altogether. One incident in connection with the portrait of Miss Kinsella amused him. She holds an iris in her hand. A real flower was got, but the flower would fade, and irises were not easy to obtain. So he went to Liberty's to get some stuff of the purple-violet tone he wanted

out of which to make a flower. He explained what he needed to the shopman, who solemnly informed him that Messrs. Liberty only kept "art colours."

Portraits of Mrs. Charles Whibley were in progress about the same time: *L'Andalouse*, *Mother of Pearl and Silver*, the unfinished *Tulip*, *Rose and Gold*, and *Red and Black*, *The Fan*. Two others of this period are of Mrs. Walter Sickert, *Green and Violet*, the second for which she sat, and Lady Eden, *Brown and Gold*. He was also painting his own portrait in the white jacket, which was changed into a black coat after Mrs. Whistler's death, and a full-length in a long brown overcoat shown in 1900 and not since.

The large canvases had to be left when he shut up the studio, but he could carry his little portfolio of lithographic paper and box of chalks everywhere, and during those two or three years he developed the art of lithography as no one had before, he and Fantin-Latour being the two chief factors in the revival of lithography in the nineties. He was determined, he said, to make "a roaring success of it." In the streets and at home he was constantly at work, and the result is the series of lithographs of the shops and gardens and galleries of Paris and many portraits. His interest in technique was tireless. He experimented on transfer-paper and on stone. He hunted old paper as strenuous people hunt lions. Drawings and proofs were for ever in the post between Paris and London, where the Ways were transferring and printing for him, and friends were for ever bringing paper from London or carrying drawings tremblingly back from Paris. He was deep in experiments with colour, and a few of the lithographs for *Songs on Stone*, already announced by Mr. Heinemann, were at last ready. They were proved in Paris by Belfont, but his shop closed in 1894, printer and stones vanished, and this was the end of the proposed publication. Since Whistler's death mysterious prints in black-and-white from the key stones have turned up in Germany, but only a few prints in colour remain, no two alike, trials in colour. He had looked for great things: "You know, I mean them to wipe up the place before I get done," he said, and their loss was a severe disappointment. Other lithographs, made then or later, were published in the *Studio*, the *Art Journal*, *L'Estampe Originale*, *L'Imagier*, the *Pagenat*, and one in our *Lithography and Lithographers*. He never wanted to keep his work, no matter in

what medium, from the public. With commissions and experiments keeping him busy in Paris, Whistler was, as he wrote to us in London, working from morning to night, and in a condition for it he wouldn't change for anything. He was compelled to change it only too soon.

CHAPTER XXXVIII: TRIALS AND GRIEFS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX.

In 1894 interruptions came, some slight, but one so serious that life and work were never the same again.

A tedious annoyance was caused by Du Maurier's *Trilby* in *Harper's Magazine*. Du Maurier represented the English students at Carrel's (Gleyre's) as veritable Crichtons, while Whistler, under the name of Joe Sibley, was ridiculed. Du Maurier's drawings left no doubt as to the identity, for in one Whistler wears the *chapeau bizarre* over his curls. Another shows him running away from a studio fight, and the text is more offensive. Joe Sibley is "'the Idle Apprentice,' the King of Bohemia, *le roi des truands*, to whom everything was forgiven, as to François Villon, *à cause de ses gentillesses* . . . Always in debt . . . vain, witty, and a most exquisite and original artist . . . with an unimpeachable moral tone. . . . Also eccentric in his attire . . . the most irresistible friend in the world as long as his friendship lasted, but that was not for ever. . . . His enmity would take the simple and straightforward form of trying to punch his ex-friend's head; and when the ex-friend was too big he would get some new friend to help him. . . . His bark was worse than his bite . . . he was better with his tongue than his fists. . . . But when he met another joker he would just collapse like a pricked bladder. He is now perched on such a topping pinnacle (of fame and notoriety combined) that people can stare at him from two hemispheres at once."

Du Maurier had posed as a friend for years, and in the *Pall Mall Gazette* Whistler protested against the insult. Du Maurier, to an interviewer, expressed surprise; he thought the description of Joe Sibley would recall the good times in Paris, and he pretended to be amazed that Whistler did not agree. He claimed that he was one of

Whistler's victims, and quoted Sheridan Ford's pirated edition of *The Gentle Art:*

"It was rather droll. Listen: 'Mr. Du Maurier and Mr. Wilde happening to meet in the rooms where Mr. Whistler was holding his first exhibition of Venice etchings, the latter brought the two face to face, and, taking each by the arm, inquired, "I say, which one of you two invented the other, eh?"' The obvious retort to that, on my part, would have been that, if he did not take care, I would invent *him*, but he had slipped away before either of us could get a word out. . . . I did what I did in a playful spirit of retaliation for this little jibe about me in his book."

The editor of *Harper's* had not understood the offensive nature of the passages. Whistler called his attention to them, and an apology was published in the magazine (January 1895), the number was suppressed, and Du Maurier was compelled to omit them, and to change Joe Sibley to Bald Anthony in the book. Whistler, when the changes were submitted to him, was satisfied. But he said:

"Well, you know, what would have happened to the new Thackeray if I hadn't been willing? But I was gracious, and I gave my approval to the sudden appearance in the story of an Anthony, tall and stout and slightly bald. The dangerous resemblance was gone. And I wired—well, you know, ha ha!—I wired to them over in America compliments and complete approval of author's new and obscure friend, Bald Anthony!"

Trilby was burlesqued at the Gaiety, and Whistler was dragged in as *The Stranger*. His hat, overcoat, eye-glass, curls, and cane were copied, but no one paid the slightest attention, and *The Stranger* vanished after the first night.

Sometimes Whistler found insult where none was intended, as in the case of a *Bibliography* compiled in 1895 for the *Library Bulletin* of the University of the State of New York—all the copies burnt, we hear, in the fire at the State Capitol, Albany. It was an appreciation, but it contained inaccuracies and quoted as authorities critics he objected to, and he was more vexed by it than there was need. Another annoyance was an anonymous article in *McClure's Magazine; Whistler, Painter and Comedian* (September 1896). He demanded an apology and the suppression of the article, and both were granted. And so

PORTRAIT OF MISS KINSELLA
THE IRIS, ROSE AND GREEN
OIL
In the possession of Miss Kinsella

(*See page* 325)

WHISTLER AT HIS PRINTING PRESS IN THE STUDIO,
RUE NOTRE-DAME-DES-CHAMPS
From a photograph by M. Dornac

(*See page* 311)

it went on to the end; he was continually coming upon references to himself, disfigured by misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and malice.

These worries occupied his time and tried his temper. But he was overwhelmed late in 1894 by a trouble infinitely more tragic. His wife was taken ill with the terrible disease, cancer. They came to London to consult the doctors in December. First they stayed at Long's Hotel in Bond Street, Mrs. Whistler surrounded by her numerous sisters, the two Paris servants, Louise and Constant, in attendance; then Mrs. Whistler was under a doctor's care in Holles Street, and Whistler stopped with his brother in Wimpole Street. Those who loved him would like to forget his misery during the weeks and months that followed. Work was going on somehow; not painting, that waited in Paris, but lithography—several portraits of Lady Haden, a drawing in Wellington Street, and others. But he told Mr. Way afterwards that he wanted them all destroyed; he should not have worked when his heart was not in it: "It was madness on my part." He brought proofs to show us. Almost every afternoon he would take J. to Way's, where the lithographs were being transferred to the stone and printed. He would lunch or dine with us, keeping up his brave front, though we knew what was in his heart. He had not been in his "Palatial Residence" two years before it was closed, and the canvases were left untouched in the "Stupendous Studio." New honours and new successes came: in 1894 the Temple Gold Medal from the Pennsylvania Academy, in 1895 a Gold Medal from Antwerp, and innumerable commissions. It was just as fortune smiled that the blow fell.

The Eden trial, which struck many as an unnecessary and almost farcical episode in his life, distracted him during these tragic months. His work ceased for weeks at a time, and he devoted himself to the case. His journeys to Paris were frequent and his correspondence enormous. The case was fought out in the courts of France. It arose out of the uncertainty as to the price which Sir William Eden should pay for his wife's portrait. He was introduced to Whistler by Mr. George Moore, to whom Whistler had mentioned one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds for a sketch in water-colour or pastel. Whistler became interested in his sitter and made a small full-length

oil, for which he would have asked a far larger sum. His irritation can be understood when Sir William Eden attempted to make him accept as " a valentine "—for it was paid on February 14—one hundred pounds in a sealed envelope. Whistler felt that the amount should have been left to him to decide. He refused to give up the picture, he cashed the cheque, and he did not return the money until legal proceedings were taken by the Baronet. Before the case came into court he wiped out the head. Even his friends thought that Whistler made a grave mistake and prejudiced his case when he cashed the cheque, instead of throwing it after the Baronet, who, on his hasty retreat from the studio, Whistler said, protested and threatened all the way down the six flights, while he from the top urged the Baronet not to expose his nationality by so unseemly a noise in a public place.

Whistler went to Paris for the trial before the Civil Tribunal on March 6, 1895. His advocates were Maître Ratier, by whose side he sat in court, and Maître Beurdeley, a collector of his etchings. Sir William Eden failed to appear. Whistler was ordered to deliver the portrait as painted, a penalty to be imposed in case of delay ; to refund twenty-five hundred francs, his lowest price ; to pay in addition one thousand francs damages. The judge stated that he was in honour bound not to deface the portrait after he had completed it, and that an artist must carry out his contract.

To Whistler the judgment was unjust ; he appealed in the Cour de Cassation, and the matter dragged on until after Mrs. Whistler's death. In England " An Artist " (J.) tried to raise a fund to pay the expenses of the trial, in order " to show in some practical form artists' appreciation for the genius of James McNeill Whistler." His appeal was responded to by only one other artist, Mr. Frederick MacMonnies, and was as unsuccessful as the subscription started after the Ruskin trial in 1878.

Mr. George Moore had been the go-between when the portrait was commissioned, Sir William Eden's ally in the legal business, and a conspicuous figure in the newspaper muddle. After the trial Whistler wrote Moore a scathing letter. Moore's answer was to taunt Whistler with old age. This was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and reprinted in French papers. Whistler was in France and he sent Moore a challenge. Whistler's seconds were M. Octave Mirbeau and

M. Viélé-Griffin. Their challenge remained unanswered, but after several days Moore relieved his feelings to a reporter. London looked upon the challenge as Whistler's crowning joke. It was no joke to Moore, who was sufficiently conversant with French manners to know how his conduct would be received in Paris. Whistler's seconds sent a *procès verbal* to the Press, stating that they had waited eight days for an answer, and not having received one, they considered their mission terminated.

Thus before the world Whistler kept up the game, though in the Rue du Bac life was a tragedy. Mrs. Whistler had returned more ill than ever. Miss Ethel Philip was married from the house early in the summer to Mr. Charles Whibley, and her sister, Miss Rosalind Birnie Philip, took her place.

After the trial Whistler went back to work. He sent *The Little White Girl* to the International Exhibition at Venice; he exhibited the second portrait of Mrs. Sickert at the Glasgow Institute; he chose six lithographs for the Centenary Exhibition in Paris. A head of Carmen, his model, was ready for the Portrait Painters in London. When in the late summer he returned to England, and, with Mrs. Whistler, settled at the Red Lion Hotel, Lyme Regis, he arranged a show of his lithographs in London. The Society of Illustrators, of which he was Vice-President, was preparing an anthology, *The London Garland*, edited by W. E. Henley, illustrated by members, and published by Messrs. Macmillan. J. asked him to contribute an illustration to a sonnet of Henley's. But he had to abandon this plan and allow a Nocturne to be reproduced. He made several lithographs at Lyme Regis: glowing forges, dark stables with horses an animal painter would envy, the smith, and the landlord. "Absolute failures, some," he told us sadly; "others, well, you know, not bad!" Two of the pictures painted at Lyme Regis are masterpieces: *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* and *The Master Smith*. In these he solved the problem of carrying on his work as he wished until it was finished. There also he painted the only large landscape we know of: the white houses of the town, the hill-side with trees beyond.

While he was still in Dorset a prize was awarded him at Venice. Several prizes in money were given in different sections to artists of different nationalities. Whistler was awarded two thousand five

hundred francs by the City of Murano, the seventh on the list. He knew the " enemies," foresaw the prattle there would be of the seventh-hand compliment, and forestalled it by explaining in the Press how the prizes had been awarded, his being equal to the first.

The exhibition of his lithographs was held at the Fine Art Society's in December 1895. Seventy were shown, mostly of the work of the last few years, and J. wrote an introduction to the catalogue, the only time he asked anybody to " introduce " him. There were no decorations in the gallery, nor was the catalogue in brown paper, save twenty-five copies, but the prints were in his frames. English artists became interested in lithography because they were asked to contribute to the Centenary Exhibition in Paris, and, at the call of Leighton, they tried their hands at it, more or less unsuccessfully. The contrast was great between their work shown at Mr. Dunthorne's gallery and Whistler's, whose prints alone are destined to live.

Whistler derived little pleasure from his triumph. The winter was spent moving from place to place. His plans were made to go to New York to consult an American specialist, forgetting as well as he could " the vast far-offness " of America. But he stayed in London, first at Garlant's Hotel, then in apartments in Half-Moon Street, later at the De Vere Gardens Hotel, and then at the Savoy. Work of one sort or another marked these moves : the lithograph of *Kensington Gardens* from the De Vere Hotel ; at the Savoy most pathetic drawings of his wife, *The Siesta* and *By the Balcony*, and the Thames from the hotel windows. He had during the first months no studio in London. He worked for a while in Mr. Walter Sickert's ; Mr. Sargent lent his early in 1896, when there was talk of a lithograph of Cecil Rhodes and a portrait of Mr. A. J. Pollitt, of whom he made a lithograph, though the painting, begun later in Fitzroy Street, was destroyed.

He interested himself in the experiments of others. In the winter of 1895 J. was asked by the *Daily Chronicle* to edit the illustration of a series of articles on London in support of the Progressive County Council. It was an event of importance to illustrators, process-men, and printers : the first effort in England for the artistic illustration of a daily paper. The *Daily Graphic* was illustrated, but its draughtsmen were trained to adapt their drawings to the printer. The scheme now was to oblige the printer to adapt himself to the illustrator. Every

illustrator of note in London contributed. Burne-Jones' frontispiece to William Morris' *News from Nowhere* was enlarged and printed successfully. J. asked Whistler to let him try the experiment of enlarging one of the Thames etchings. Whistler was interested. *Black Lion Wharf* was selected and printed in the *Daily Chronicle*, February 22, 1895, the very day of the month, Washington's Birthday, when, ten years later, the London Memorial Exhibition opened. With its publication the success of the series was complete, not politically, for the twenty-four drawings were said to have lost the Progressives twenty-five seats. The etching stood the enlarging superbly. J. made the proprietors pay for the print, the first time Whistler was paid for the use of one of his works not made as an illustration.

Whistler came to us almost daily. Late one afternoon he brought his transfer-paper, and made a lithograph of J. as he sprawled comfortably, and uncomfortably had to keep the pose, in an easy-chair before the fire. Whistler made four portraits in sucession of J. and one of E., each in an afternoon. He drew on as the light faded, and the portrait of E. was done while the firelight flickered on her face and on his paper. Then he told us he had taken a studio in Fitzroy Street to paint a large full-length of J. in a Russian cloak—*The Russian Schube*—which he thought the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts might like to have. But J. was called away, Mrs. Whistler grew rapidly worse, the scheme was dropped never to be taken up again.

On other afternoons he and J. would go to Way's, where the Savoy drawings were put on the stone. The lithotint of *The Thames* was done on a stone sent to the hotel. Drawings made in Paris, Lyme Regis, London were transferred and gone all over with chalk, stump, scraper. He worked in a little room adjoining Mr. Way's office, the walls of which were covered with pastels and water-colours by him and C. E. Holloway. There he drew the portraits of Mr. Thomas Way in the firelight, never stopping until dark, when Mr. Way would bring out some rare old liqueur, and there was a rest before he hurried back to the Savoy. His nights were spent sitting up by his wife. He slept a little in the morning and usually came to us in the afternoon, at times so exhausted that we feared more for him than for her.

The studio at No. 8 Fitzroy Street was a huge place at the back of the house, one flight up, reached by a ramshackle glass-roofed

passage. The portrait of Mr. Pollitt was started and one of Mr Robert Barr's daughter, which has disappeared. Mr. Cowan sat again, and another was begun of Mr. S. R. Crockett, who describes the sittings :

" I don't think he liked me at first. Someone had told him I was a Philistine of Askelon. . . . He told me lots about his early times in London and Paris, but all in fragments, just as the thing occurred to him. Like an idiot, I took no notes. Lots, too, about Carlyle and his sittings, as likely to interest a Scot. He had got on unexpectedly well with True Thomas, chiefly by letting him do the talking, and never opening his mouth, except when Carlyle wanted him to talk. Carlyle asked him about Paris, and was unexpectedly interested in the *cafés*, and so forth. Whistler told him the names of some—Riche, Anglais, Véfour, and Foyot and Lavenue on the south side. Carlyle seemed to be mentally taking notes. Then he suddenly raised his head and demanded, ' Can a man get a chop there ? '

" Concerning my own sittings, he was very particular that I should always be in good form—' trampling ' as he said—otherwise he would tell me to go away and play. . . . Mr. Fisher Unwin had arranged for a lithograph, but Whistler said he would make a picture like a postage stamp, and next year all the exhibitions would be busy as anthills with similar ' postage stamp ' portraits. ' Some folk think life-size means six foot by three ; I'll show them ! ' he said more than once. I wanted to shell out as he went on, and once, being flush (new book or something), I said I had fifty pounds which was annoying me, and I wished he would take it. He was very sweet about it, and said he understood. Money burnt a hole in his pocket, too, but he could not take any money, as he might never finish the work. Any day his brush might drop, and he could not do another stroke.

" It was a bad omen ! His wife grew worse. He sent me word not to come. She died, and I never saw him after. I wish you could tell me what became of that picture. He called it *The Grey Man*."

This is another example of Whistler's repetition of titles. Mr. Cowan's portrait, painted the same year, was *The Grey Man* too. Of Mr. Crockett's, Whistler said to us that Crockett was delighted with it as far as it had gone, and he was rather pleased with it himself. He painted several of these small full-lengths, which were to show the fallacy of the life-size theory and of the belief that the importance of

a portrait depends on the size of the canvas. Kennedy, after the portrait destroyed in Paris, stood for a second, now in the Metropolitan Museum; Mr. Arnold Hannay for another; C. E. Holloway for *The Philosopher*, which Whistler considered particularly successful.

In the spring Whistler moved his wife from the Savoy to St. Jude's Cottage, Hampstead Heath, rented from Canon and Mrs. Barnett. After this he began to give up hope. It was a sad day when for the first time he admitted, "We are very, very bad." And we understood that the end was near the afternoon when he, the most fastidious, appeared wearing one black and one brown shoe, and explaining that he had a corn. But, indeed, many times it seemed as if in his despair he did not know what he was doing. The last day Mr. Sydney Pawling met him walking, running across the Heath, looking at nothing, seeing no one. Mr. Pawling, alarmed, stopped him. "Don't speak! Don't speak! It is terrible!" he said, and was gone. That was the end.

Mrs. Whistler died on May 10 and was buried at Chiswick on the 14th. We have heard that the funeral was arranged for the 13th, but Whistler, objecting to the date, postponed it a day, and Mrs. Whistler was buried on her birthday. He never would do anything on the 13th if he could help it.

We were abroad, but the first Sunday after E.'s return he came and asked her to go with him to the National Gallery. There he showed her the pictures "Trixie" loved, standing long before Tintoretto's *Milky Way*, her favourite. There was no talk about pictures—Canaletto was barely looked at—there was no talk about anything, and the tragedy that could not be forgotten was never referred to. But M. Paul Renouard was in the Gallery and came to Whistler with the word of comfort, from which he shrank. During the first few months after Mrs. Whistler's death, in the shock of his sorrow and loss, Whistler made her sister, Miss Rosalind Birnie Philip, his ward, and drew up a new will appointing her his heiress and executrix; eventually cancelling his former bequests, and leaving everything to her absolutely.

CHAPTER XXXIX: ALONE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX.

Whistler stayed a short time at Hampstead with his sisters-in-law, and then went to Mr. Heinemann at Whitehall Court, where he remained, on and off, for two or three years, spending only the periods of Mr. Heinemann's absence at Garlant's Hotel or in Paris. He was with us day after day. Little notes came from the studio to ask if we would be in and alone in the evening, and, if so, he would dine with us. At first he would not join us if we expected anyone. He liked to sit and talk, he said, but he could not meet other people. He saw few outside the studio, except Mr. Heinemann, Mr. Kennedy, and ourselves. We went to the studio, and often he and J. sketched together in the streets.

For these sketching expeditions Whistler prepared beforehand the colours he wanted to use, and if the day turned out too grey or too radiant for his scheme nothing was done. The chosen colours were mixed, and little tubes, filled with them, were carried in his small paint-box, which held also the tiny palette with the pure colours arranged on it, his brushes, and two or three small panels. Many studies were made. The most important was of St. John's, Westminster. He loved the quiet corner, now destroyed, and he went there many times. He worked away, his top hat jammed down on his nose, sitting on a three-legged stool, his paint-box on his knee, the panel in it, beginning at once in colour on the panel, usually finishing the sketch in one afternoon, though he took two over the church. The painting was simply done, commencing with the point of interest, the masses put in bigly, the details worked into them. Just as in the studio, five minutes after he had begun he became so absorbed in his work that he forgot everything else until it grew too dark to see. When ladies would come and recognise him, he stopped, got up, and spoke to them, always charmingly.

He made little journeys during the summer, one to Rochester and Canterbury, with Mrs. Whibley and Miss Birnie Philip. But, disgusted with the inns and the food, he came back after a day or so. Another was with Mr. Kennedy, who writes us:

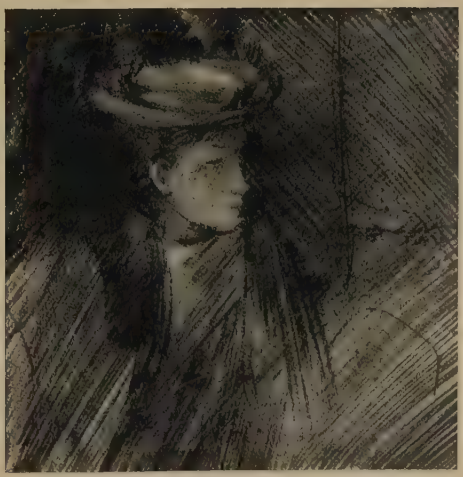


ILLUSTRATION TO LITTLE JOHANNES

PORTRAIT

DRAWINGS ON WOOD

In the Pennell Collection, Library of Congress, Washington

(*See page 270*)

WATER-COLOUR LANDSCAPE

Loaned by Mrs. Mortimer Menpes

"It was agreed that Whistler and myself should go to France. Neither of us had any idea *where* we were going except to Havre. We arrived in the early morning, and after he got shaved and had coffee, we took the boat to Honfleur, which, as you know, has a tidal service. 'Do you know where we are going?' I said to him. 'No, I don't,' said he. 'Well,' said I, 'there is a white-whiskered, respectable-looking old gentleman; perhaps he knows the lay of the ground. Tip him a stave.'

"So Whistler asked him about the hotels in Honfleur. There were two—the Cheval Blanc on the quay, and the Ferme de St. Siméon on the outskirts. The Cheval was so dirty that I got the only cab, and, piling the luggage on it ourselves, drove off to the farm. Fortunately, there were two vacant rooms, and we stayed there a week. The cooking was excellent, and, of course, *Madame* knew who *Monsieur Vistlaire* was. Whistler used to kick up a row every night with me about the 'ridiculous British' to divert his mind, I imagine, and sometimes my retorts were so sharp that I said to myself, 'All is over between us now.' But he used to bob up serenely in the morning, as if nothing had happened, and after *déjeuner* he would take his small box of colours and paint in the large church. I used to stroll about the town and look in occasionally to see that he came to no harm. It was here that he said he was going over to Rome some day, and when I said, 'Don't forget to let me know, so that I may be on hand to see you wandering up the aisle in sackcloth and ashes, with a candle in each hand, or scrubbing the floor!' he said, in a tone of horrified astonishment, 'Good God! O'K.,* is it possible? Why, I thought they would make me a hell of a swell of an abbot, or something like that.'

"It was amusing to see him manœuvre to get near the big kitchen fire, overcoat on. He was a true American in his liking for heat, and the way he would sidle into the kitchen, which opened on out-of-doors, all the time mildly flattering *Madame*, was very characteristic. We went to Trouville one day on the diligence, and had a capital *déjeuner* at the Café de Paris, before which Whistler said, 'We must do this *en Prince*, O'K.!' 'All right, your Highness, I'm with you!' After-

* Whistler never lost his fancy for inventing names for his friends, and O'K. was the one he found for Mr. Kennedy, rarely calling him by any other either in conversation or correspondence.

wards, on the beach, he went to sleep on a chair, leaning back against a bath-house, his straw hat tipped on his nose. It was funny, but sleep after luncheon was a necessity to him. Coming back to London, in the harbour of Southampton, after listening to the usual unwearying talk against the British, I said, 'Oh, be reasonable!' 'Why should I?' said he."

The Ferme de St. Siméon has been called the Cradle of Impressionism. It was here that Boudin lived and most of the Impressionists came, and round about they found their subjects.

Later on Whistler spent a few days at Calais in the Meurice, Sterne's Hotel, where he was miserable. Then he tried to find J. at Whitby, where they missed each other, and where he said the glitter of the windows made the town look like the Crystal Palace.

Whistler recovered slowly, and journeys helped him less than work in the studio, where, by degrees, he returned to the schemes so sadly interrupted. We remember his coming to us with Mr. Kennedy one Sunday afternoon, bringing up our three flights of stairs *The Master Smith* to show it to us once again before it went to America. Mr. Kennedy had captured it, fearful of a touch being added. It was placed on one chair, Whistler, on another facing it, wretched at the thought of parting with it. It was always a wrench to let a picture go.

After a while he did not mind meeting a few people. A man he liked to see was Timothy Cole. There was a great scheme that he should make a series of drawings on wood and Cole engrave them. Cole brought the blocks prepared for him to draw on. But that is the last we or Cole heard about it, though we saw the blocks frequently at Fitzroy Street. Mr. Cole says:

"I did not speak to him more than once after I had given him the wood blocks. I did not think it prudent to press him about the matter, fearing he might get disgusted and give it up. . . . The blocks were the size of the *Century* page."

Cole gave Whistler some of his prints, and they pleased Whistler very much, though he rarely cared to own the pictures and prints of other artists. Once when an etcher gave him a not very wonderful proof, he tore it up, saying, "I do not collect etchings, I make them! I do not collect the works of my contemporaries!" With the exception of his portrait by Boxall we never saw a scrap of anyone else's work

about his studio or his house, save the forgery someone sent him which he kept and hung for a while. Another side to Mr. Cole was his endless practical jokes. He used to do extraordinary things, to Whistler's amusement. On one point only they were not in sympathy: Mr. Cole's theories of diet. One evening at dinner Cole told us that he and his family were living chiefly on rhubarb tops, they have such a "foody" taste, his son thought. "Dear me, poor fellow," said Whistler, "it sounds as if once, long long ago, he had really eaten, and still has a dim memory of what food is!" "And spinach," Cole added, "it's fine. We eat it raw, it's wonderful the things it does for you!" "But what does it do for you?" Whistler asked, and Cole began a dissertation on the juices of the stomach. "Well, you know," Whistler told him, "when you begin to talk about the stomach and its juices, it's time to stop dining." After that Cole managed to dismiss his theories and dine like other people when with us.

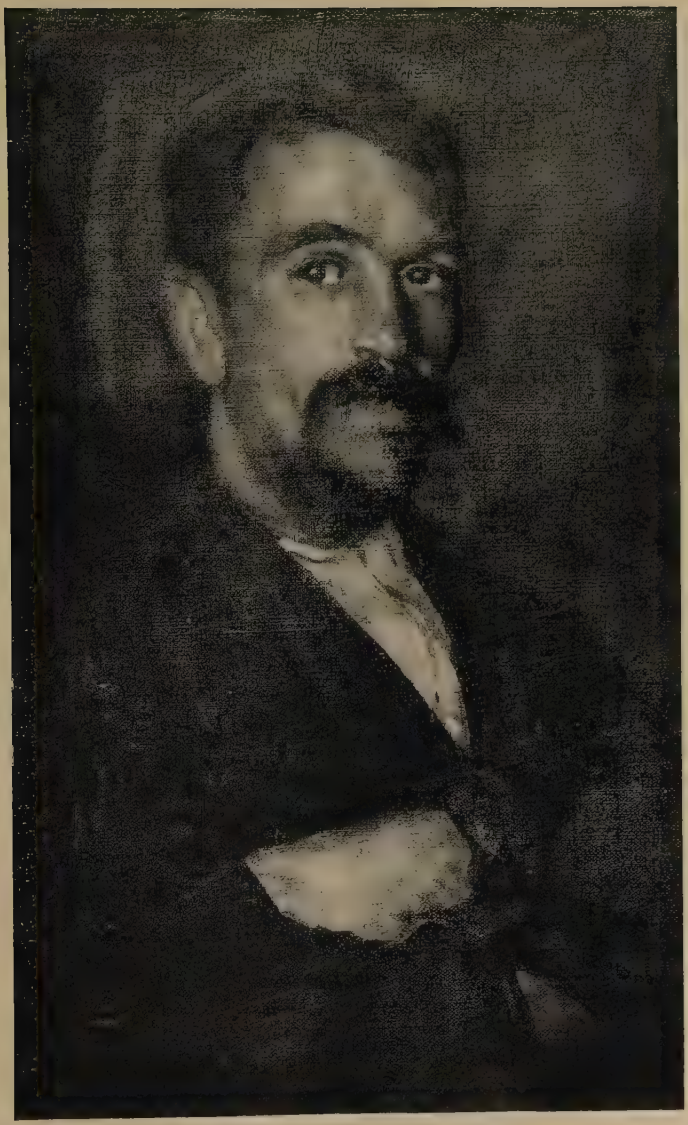
Professor John Van Dyke was in London that fall, and Whistler was willing to come to meet him. A long darn in a tablecloth afterwards bore witness to the animation of one of those dinners—Whistler's knife brought down sharply on the table to emphasise his argument. The subject was *Las Meniñas*, which he had never seen, which everyone else had seen. Velasquez painted the picture just as you see it, he maintained; no one agreed. Perspectives and plans were drawn on the unfortunate cloth, chairs were pushed back, the situation grew critical. Whistler was forced to yield slowly, when, of a sudden, his eyes fell on Van Dyke's feet in long, pointed shoes, then the American fashion, their points carried to a degree of fineness no English bootmaker could rival. "My God, Van Dyke, where did you get your shoes?" Whistler asked. We could not go on fighting after that; defeat was avoided. Though Whistler had never been to Madrid, it seemed as if he had seen the pictures, so familiar was he with them, and though he was at times not right about them, his interest was endless. We remember "Bob" Stevenson telling him, to his great delight, how, one summer day with J. in the Long Gallery of the Prado where *Las Meniñas* then hung, an old peasant dressed in faded blue-green came and sat down on the green bench in front, and straightway he became part of the picture, so true was its atmosphere. There are legends of Whistler's descent into a *Casa des Huespedes* in Madrid with Sargent

and J., but J. never was there and Sargent denies it. It is another legend. Whistler could get more from a glance at a photograph than most painters from six months' copying.

Another evening Claude was the subject—Claude compared to Turner. Whistler could never see the master Englishman adored in Turner; not because of Ruskin, for Mr. Walter Greaves told us that years before the Ruskin trial Whistler "reviled Turner." Mr. Cole in 1896 was engraving Turners in the National Gallery, and Whistler insisted on their inferiority to the Claudes, so amazingly demonstrated in Trafalgar Square, where Turner invited the comparison disastrous to him. The argument grew heated, and Whistler adjourned it until the next morning, when he arranged to meet Cole and J. in the Gallery. Whistler compared the work of the two artists hanging side by side, as Turner wished:

"Well, you know, you have only to look. Claude is the artist who knows there is no painting the sun itself, and so he chooses the moment after the sun has set, or has hid behind a cloud, and its light fills the sky, and that light he suggests as no other painter ever could. But Turner must paint nothing less than the sun, and he sticks on a blob of paint—let us be thankful that it isn't a red wafer, as in some of his other pictures—and there isn't any illusion whatever, and the Englishman lifts up his head in ecstatic conceit with the English painter, who alone has dared to do what no artist would ever be fool enough to attempt! And look at the architecture. Claude could draw a classical building as it is; Turner must invent, imagine architecture as no architect could design it, and no builder could put it up, and as it never would stand up—the old amateur!"

They went on to the Canalettos and Guardis Whistler could not weary of—to Canaletto's big red church and the tiny Rotunda at Vauxhall with the little figures, from which Hogarth learned so much. Whistler always acknowledged Guardi's influence, though it had not led him in Venice to paint pictures like Guardi or Canaletto either. And he never tired of pointing out that great artists like Guardi and Canaletto and Velasquez, who were born and worked in the South, did not try to paint sunlight, but kept their work grey and low in tone. That day at the National Gallery, before he could finish explaining the similarity between his work and Guardi's the talk came to an end, for half the

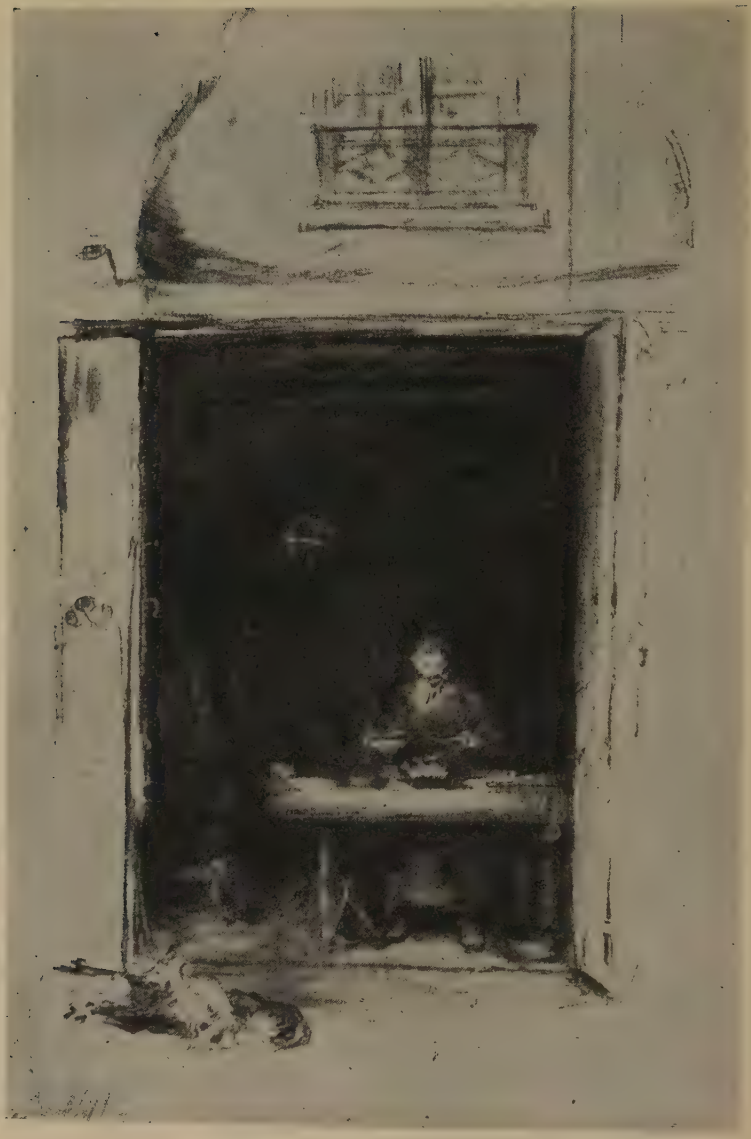


THE MASTER SMITH OF LYME REGIS

OIL

In the Boston Museum of Fine Arts

(*See page* 331)



THE SMITH
PASSAGE DU DRAGON
LITHOGRAPH. W. 73

(*See page* 326)

copyists in the room had left their easels. He stopped. He could not talk to an audience which he was not sure was sympathetic. Sure of sympathy, he would talk for ever in praise of the luminosity of Claude, the certainty of Canaletto, the wonderful tone of Guardi, the character and colour of Hogarth. Another Italian about whom he was enthusiastic was Michael Angelo Caravaggio, admiring his things in the Louvre. Whistler maintained that the exact knowledge, the science, of the Old Masters was the reason of their greatness. The modern painter has a few tricks, a few fads ; these give out, and nothing is left. Knowledge is inexhaustible. Tintoretto did not find his way until he was forty. Titian was painting in as masterly a manner in his last year as in his youth. And speaking of the cleverness—a term he hated—of the modern man, he said :

" Think of the finish, the delicacy, the elegance, the repose of a little Terborgh, Vermeer, Metsu. These were masters who could paint interiors, chandeliers, and all the rest ; and what a difference between them and the clever little interiors now ! "

In the autumn Whistler established Miss Birnie Philip and her mother in the Rue du Bac and returned to Mr. Heinemann's flat at Whitehall Court, making it so much his home that before long he was laughingly alluding to " my guest Heinemann." It is not likely that the two would ever have parted had not Mr. Heinemann married, and even then Whistler stayed with him as long as his health remained good, dependent on the friendship formed late in life with a man many years younger. When Mr. Heinemann was away he complained that London was duller and blacker than ever. Whistler shrank from condolence in his great grief or from a revival of the memories of those terrible weeks. His host was careful, or we would invite Whistler to us if anybody was expected at Whitehall Court. After three or four years Mr. Heinemann's married life ended abruptly, and Whistler at once suggested that they should go back to the old way. Mr. Heinemann took another flat in Whitehall Court with this idea. But before the plan could be realised Whistler died.

In the autumn of 1896 Mr. Henry Savage Landor, back from Japan and Korea, also stayed with Mr. Heinemann ; " a rare fellow, full of real affection," Whistler said of him. They sat up for hours together night after night. Whistler slept badly, and Mr. Landor

can do with less sleep than most people. There was a skull in the drawing-room that Mr. Landor tells us Whistler sketched over and over again, while they talked till morning. When they drew the curtains it was day; then Whistler dressed, breakfasted, and went to the studio. He brought us stories of Mr. Landor; the way in which he would start for the ends of the earth as if to stroll in Piccadilly, "leaving the costume of travel to the Briton crossing the Channel"; or, in light shoes, "outwalk the stoutest-shod gillie over Scotch moors." Then Whistler brought us Mr. Landor, with whom our friendship dates from the morning when, at Whistler's request, he sat Japanese fashion on the floor in front of our fire, a rug wrapped round him for kimono, and devoured imaginary rice with pencils for chopsticks. When Mr. Landor had his horrible experiences in Thibet and the story of his tortures was telegraphed to Europe, Whistler was the first to send him a cable rejoicing at his escape. Whistler also took a fancy while in Whitehall Court to Mr. Heinemann's brother, Edmund, who was, Whistler said, "something in the City," who saw to one or two investments for him, and whom he christened the "Napoleon of Finance" and described as "sitting in a tangled web of telegraphs and telephones." He never had invested money before, and it was with pride that he deposited at the bank his scrip and collected his dividends. To end a discussion about the City Mr. Edmund Heinemann once said to him, "You ain't on the Stock Exchange!" "Well," said Whistler, "you just thank your stars, Eddy, I ain't, because if I was, there wouldn't be much room for you! What!"

Evening after evening he would linger in the studio until he could see no longer, keeping dinner waiting at Whitehall Court, so that no time could ever be fixed. Arriving, he would mix cocktails, an art in which he excelled and must have learned in the days when he stayed away from the Coast Survey. If it did not suit him to dine at Whitehall Court he would write or wire to say he could dine with us if we liked; or that he had amazing things to tell us, should he come? or that he was sure we were both wanting to see him; or Heinemann's servant, Payne, would announce his coming; or he would drive straight from the studio, reaching us sometimes before the notes he had sent, or with the wires unsent in his pocket; almost the only time we have known him willingly not to dress for dinner. On rare occasions he came in

after we had dined, demanded the *fortune du pot* of our small establishment, and was content no matter how meagre that fortune might prove, though if it included "a piece of American cake," or anything sweet, he was better pleased. He grumbled only over our Sunday supper, which was cold in English fashion, out of deference to Bowen, our old English servant. Then he would bring Constant, his valet, model, and cook, to make an onion soup or an omelette. Constant was succeeded by a little Belgian called Marie, who was supposed to look after the studio, and who, when he stayed at Garlant's and we dined with him there, would be summoned to dress the salad and make the coffee. It was not long after this that, by the doctor's advice, he gave up coffee and stopped smoking too. Few men ever ate less than Whistler, but few were more fastidious about what they did eat. He made the best of our English cooking while it lasted, but he was glad when Bowen was replaced by Louise and then Augustine, who were French and who could make the soups, salads, and dishes he liked, and who did not hesitate to scold him when he was late and ruined the dinner.

These meetings must have been pleasant to Whistler as to us; there were weeks when he came every evening. On his arrival he might be silent, but after his nap he would begin talking, and his talk was as good on the last evening with us as on the first. We shall always regret that we made no notes of what he said, though the charm of his talk would have eluded a shorthand reporter. Much can never be forgotten. In "surroundings of antagonism" he wrapped this talk as well as himself in "a species of misunderstanding" and deliberately mystified, bewildered, and aggravated the company. But when disguise was not necessary, and he talked at his ease, he impressed everyone with his sanity of judgment, breadth of interest, and keenness of intellect. His reading was extensive, though we never ceased to wonder when he found time for it, save during sleepless nights. His talk abounded in quotations, especially from the Bible, that "splendid mine of invective," he described it. His diversity of knowledge was as unexpected as his extensive reading, and we felt that he knew things intuitively, just as by some uncanny faculty he heard everything said about him. When he chose he held the floor and was then at his best. "I am not arguing with you, I am telling you," he would say, and he would lose his temper, which was violent as ever, but he was friendlier than before

when it was over. He liked to hear the last gossip, and reproached us if we had none for him. More than once he told E. her discretion amounted positively to indiscretion; he was sure she had a cupboard full of skeletons, and some day, when she was pulling the strings of one carefully to put it back in place, the whole lot would come rattling down about her ears. And so, the shadow of sorrow in the background, the evenings went by that winter in the little dining-room which had been Etty's studio where the huge Edinburgh pictures were painted.

The Eden affair was still dragging on, and Whistler was disgusted to find English artists as afraid to support him as at the Ruskin trial. One day in Bond Street he met a Follower, just returned to town, arm-on-arm with "the Baronet." The Follower at once left a card at Fitzroy Street. Whistler wrote "Judas Iscariot" on it and sent it back to him. A few weeks later the New English Art Club hung Sir William Eden's work, and with it, he said, "their shame, upon their walls." He complimented them, much to their discomfort, on their appetite for "toad." To clear the air, which had become sultry in the art clubs and studios, we invited Professor Fred Brown and Dr. D. S. MacColl to meet him one evening at dinner, and discuss things. Professor Brown had another engagement. Dr. MacColl came, and Whistler, who did not mind how hard a man fought if he fought at all, continued on terms with him. But the New English Art Club he never forgave.

A show of J.'s lithographs of Granada and the Alhambra was arranged at the Fine Art Society's during December 1896, and for the catalogue Whistler wrote an introductory note, and another for a show of Phil May's drawings in the same gallery. He designed the cover for Mr. Charles Whibley's *Book of Scoundrels*, and also two covers for novels by Miss Elizabeth Robins, *Below the Salt*, for which he drew a silver ship, and *The Open Question*, for which he devised shields; all three books published by Mr. Heinemann. The design for the *Book of Scoundrels* was a gallows, drawn in thin lines, with rope and noose attached. Henley, to whom it was shown, asked whether the gallows should not have been drawn with a support. Whistler's comment was: "Well, you know, that's the usual sort of gallows, but this one will do. It will hang all of us. Just like Henley's selfishness to want a strong one!" an allusion to Henley's size.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. A. J. CASSATT

(See page 257)

THE BEACH

WATER-COLOUR

In the possession of Mrs. Knowles

SHOP WINDOW AT DIEPPE

WATER-COLOUR

(*See page* 352)

During the winter Whistler met Sir Seymour Haden for the last time at a dinner given by the Society of Illustrators (of which both were Vice-Presidents) to Mr. Alfred Parsons, on his election to the Royal Academy. It was Whistler's first appearance in public since his wife's death, and as we had persuaded him to go, never anticipating any such meeting, we were annoyed to think that we had exposed him to the unpleasantness of it, or Haden either, for we had had no part in their quarrels. However, as soon as Whistler saw Haden he woke up and began to enjoy himself. His laugh carried far. Haden heard it, and may have seen the three monocles on the dinner-table. He looked toward the laugh, dropped his spoon in his soup-plate, and left. Later Whistler was called upon to make a speech and could not get out of it. But it was an anti-climax. The event of the dinner was over.

At Christmas he went with Mr. and Mrs. T. Fisher Unwin and ourselves to Bournemouth, where our hotel was an old-fashioned inn, selected from the guide-book because it was the nearest to the sea. We breakfasted in our rooms, we met at lunch to order dinner, and the rest of the day Whistler insisted must be spent getting an appetite for it—wandering on the cliffs, he with his little paint-box. But the sea was on the wrong side, the wind blew the wrong way, he could do nothing. Some days we took long drives. One damp, cold, cheerless afternoon we stopped at a small inn in Poole. The landlady, watching Whistler sip his hot whisky and water, was convinced he was somebody, but was unable to place him. "And who do you suppose I am?" Whistler asked at last. "I can't exactly say, sir, but I should fancy you was from the 'Alls!" Aubrey Beardsley was then at Boscombe, a further stage in his brave fight with death, and we went to see him. But the sight of the suffering of others was too cruel a reminder to Whistler, and he shrank from going to Beardsley.

Dinner was the event of the day, and it would have proved a disaster had Whistler not seen humour in being expected to eat it, so little was it what he thought a dinner should be. On Christmas Day he was melancholy and stared at the turkey and bread sauce, the sodden potatoes and soaked greens: "To think of my beautiful room in the Rue du Bac, and the rest of them there, eating their Christmas dinner, having up my wonderful old Pouilly from my cellar."

But we had something else to talk about. In the *Saturday Review* of that week, December 26, there was an article, signed Walter Sickert, that was of interest to us all.

CHAPTER XL: THE LITHOGRAPH CASE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX AND EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN.

Mr. Sickert's article was ostensibly inspired by the show of J.'s lithographs of Granada at the Fine Art Society's, which Whistler had introduced. Whistler understood it to be an attack upon himself, as well as upon J., whose lithographs alone it pretended to deal with. As a rule, Whistler's lithographs were made on lithographic paper and transferred to the stone. The article argued that to pass off drawings made on paper as lithographs was as misleading to "the purchaser on the vital point of commercial value" as to sell photogravures for etchings, which, when Sir Hubert Herkomer had done so, led to a protest from J. and Whistler, and also from Mr. Sickert, whose condemnation had been strong. The article, therefore, was written either ignorantly or maliciously, for no such distinction in lithography has ever been made. Transfer-paper is as old as Senefelder, the inventor of lithography, who looked upon it as the most important part of his invention. The comment amounted to a charge of dishonesty, and an apology was demanded by J. The apology was refused by Mr. Frank Harris, editor of the *Saturday Review*, and consequently Messrs. Lewis and Lewis brought an action for libel against writer and editor.

The action stood in J.'s name, and Whistler was the principal witness. In the hope that the matter might be settled by an apology and without appeal to the law, Mr. Heinemann arranged a meeting between the editor of the *Saturday Review* and Whistler, but nothing came of it. People who knew nothing of lithography got involved in the case, and our friend Harold Frederic, for one, entangled himself with the enemy. Others were found to know a great deal whom we never suspected of knowing anything, and through Whistler we discovered that Mr. Alfred Gilbert started life as a lithographer, was indignant with the *Saturday Review*, and only too willing to offer his help to us. Meetings followed on Sunday evenings in the huge Maida Vale house where Mr.

Gilbert was trying to revive mediæval relations between master and workman and live the life of a craftsman with pupils and assistants, a brave experiment which ended in failure.

The case was fixed for April 1897, the most inconvenient time of the year for the artist who exhibits. Whistler was working on the portrait of Miss Kinsella, and he had promised three pictures to the *Salon: Green and Violet*, *Rose and Gold*, and a Nocturne. M. Helleu, who was in London, catalogued and measured them, reserving space on the wall. Only a few days were left before sending in and the work would never be done in time. Whistler was in despair. It was then, too, he learned that C. E. Holloway, a distinguished artist whom the world never knew, was ill in his studio near by. Holloway was anything but a successful man, and Whistler was shocked to find him in bed, lacking every comfort. He provided doctors, nurses, medicine, and food, and looked after the dying man's family. He spent afternoons in Holloway's tiny bedroom. All this took up time and made it difficult to get his pictures ready for the *Salon*.

He called one morning on his way to the studio to tell us of the death of Holloway. He was going to the funeral, and suggested a fund to purchase some of the pictures and give the proceeds to the family. He was nervous and worried, the *Salon* clamouring for his work on the one hand, the trial claiming him on the other. People, he complained, did not seem to understand the importance of his time. Things were amazing in the studio, and he was expected to leave them just to go into court. No, he wouldn't, that was the end of it. The pictures must be finished. J. said to him: "The case is as much yours as mine, and you must come. Your reputation is involved. There will be an end to your lithography if we lose. You must fight."

Whistler liked one the better for the contradiction he was supposed unable to bear, and he answered: "Well, you know, but really—why, of course, Joseph, it's all right. I'm coming; of course, we'll fight it through together. I never meant not to. That's all right."

And to E., who went with him to the "Temple of Pomona" in the Strand, to order flowers for Holloway, he kept saying: "You know, really, Joseph mustn't talk like that! Of course, it's all right. Of course, I never meant not to come. You must tell him it's all right. I never back out!"

His work stopped. His pictures did not go to Paris. He stood by us.

The case was tried in the King's Bench Division on April 5, before Mr. Justice Mathew. We were represented by Sir Edward Clarke, Q.C., and Mr. Eldon Bankes. Whistler arrived early. In the great hall he met the counsel for the other side, Mr. Bigham, an acquaintance, and, leaning on his arm, entered the court, "capturing the enemy's counsel on the way," he said, as he sat down between us and Sir George Lewis. The counsel are now both judges.

J., in the witness-box, pointed out that he had made lithographs both on paper and on stone; that there was no difference between them, an historical fact which he was able to prove; that for the defendants to deny that a lithograph made on paper was as much a lithograph as a lithograph made on stone showed that they knew nothing about the subject, or else were acting out of malice.

Whistler was called next. He said his grievance was the accusation that he pursued the same evil practice. He was asked by Mr. Bigham if he was very angry with Mr. Sickert, and he replied he might not be angry with Mr. Sickert, but he was disgusted that "distinguished people like Mr. Pennell and myself are attacked by an absolutely unknown authority (Mr. Sickert), an insignificant and irresponsible person."

"Then," said Mr. Bigham, "Mr. Sickert is an insignificant and irresponsible person who can do no harm?"

Whistler answered: "Even a fool can do harm, and if any harm is done to Mr. Pennell it is done to me. This is a question for all artists." And he added that Mr. Sickert's "pretended compliments and flatteries were a most impertinent piece of insolence, tainted with a certain obsequious approach."

Further asked if this was his action, he said: "I am afraid if Mr. Pennell had not taken these proceedings, I should."

"You are working together then?"

"No, we are on the same side."

"Are you bearing any part of the costs?"

"No, but I am quite willing."

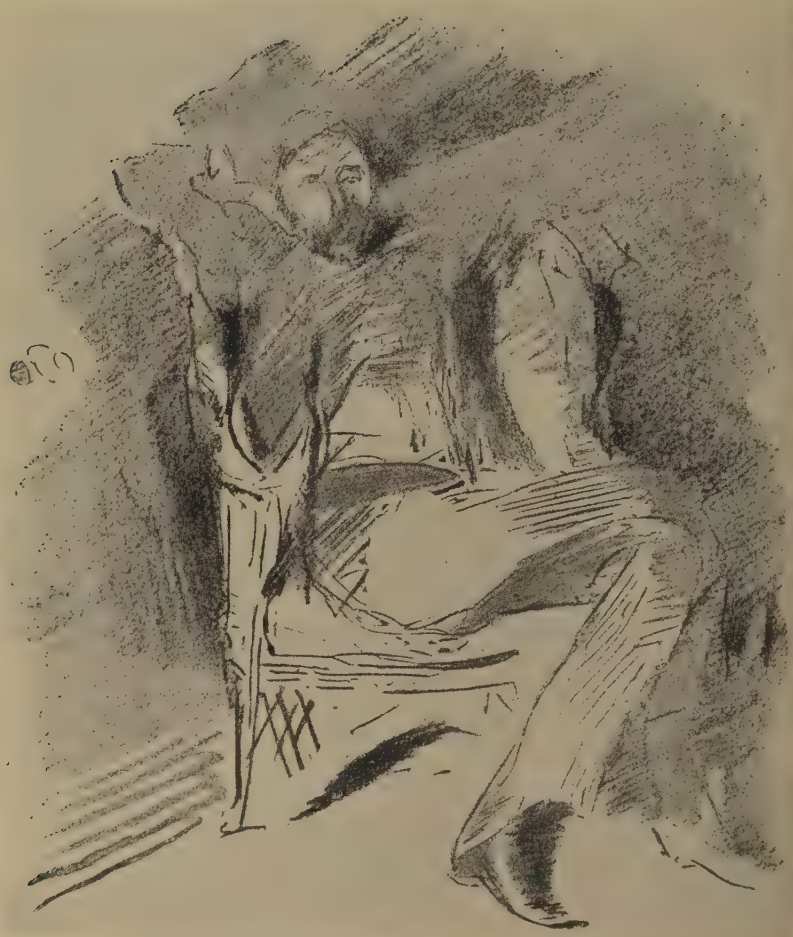
Sir Edward Clarke then interposed and asked if there was any foundation for that question.

"Only the lightness and delicacy of the counsel's suggestion."

THE THAMES

LITHOTINT. W. 125

(*See page* 333)



FIRELIGHT. JOSEPH PENNELL. NO. I

LITHOGRAPH. W. 104

By permission of T. Fisher Unwin, Esq.

(*See page* 333)

At the end of the cross-examination Whistler adjusted his eye-glass, put his hat on the rail of the witness-box, slowly pulled off one glove after the other. He turned to the judge and said :

" And now, my Lord, may I tell you why we are all here ? "

" No, Mr. Whistler," said his Lordship ; " we are all here because we cannot help it."

Whistler left the box. What he meant to say no one will ever know. We asked him later. He shook his head. The moment for saying it had passed.

Sir Sidney Colvin, Keeper of the Print Room of the British Museum ; Mr. Strange, of the Art Library, South Kensington ; Mr. Way and Mr. Goulding, professional lithographic printers ; and Mr. Alfred Gilbert were our witnesses.

Mr. Bigham said that the case was a storm in a teacup blown up by Whistler, and that the article could do no harm to anybody.

Mr. Sickert protested that he was familiar with all the processes of lithography ; that the plaintiff's lithographs were not lithographs, but, as a matter of fact, mere transfers. He had submitted the article to another paper, which refused it before it was accepted by the *Saturday Review*. He had been under the impression that the plaintiff would like a newspaper correspondence. He was actuated by a pedantic purism. Cross-examined by Sir Edward Clarke, he had to admit by implication that he intended to charge the plaintiff with dishonest practices, and that he had caught Mr. Pennell, the purist, tripping. He had to admit that the only lithograph he ever published was made in the same way, and he had called it, or allowed it to be called, a lithograph.

Mr. Sickert's witnesses scarcely helped him. Mr. C. H. Shannon's testimony was more favourable to us than to him. Mr. Rothenstein testified that all the lithographs he had published were done exactly as Whistler and J. had done theirs, and as he came out of the box fell into his hat. Mr. George Moore solemnly proclaimed that he knew nothing about lithographs, but that he knew Degas. " What's Degas ? " roared the judge, thinking some new process was being sprung on him, and Mr. Moore vanished. The editor of the *Saturday Review* acknowledged that he had published an illustrated supplement full of lithographs done on transfer-paper and advertised by him as lithographs ; that he had not known what was in Mr. Sickert's article until it appeared

The judge, in summing up, said that a critic might express a most disparaging opinion on an artist's work and might refer to him in the most disagreeable terms, but he must not attribute to the artist discreditable conduct, unless he could prove that his charge was true. If the jury thought the criticism merely sharp and exaggerated, they would find a verdict for the defendant, but if not—that is, if it was more than this—they should consider to what damages the plaintiff was entitled. The verdict was for the plaintiff—damages fifty pounds, not a high estimate of the value of artistic morality on the part of the British jury, but at least, in so far as it carried costs, higher than the estimate put upon Whistler's work in the Ruskin trial.

So convinced were the other side of a verdict in their favour that a rumour reached us of a luncheon ordered beforehand at the Savoy, on the second day, by the editor of the *Saturday Review* to celebrate our defeat. We waited to be sure. Then we carried off Whistler, Mr. Reginald Poole, who had conducted the case for us, and Mr. Jonathan Sturges to the Café Royal for our breakfast. Whistler was jubilant, and nothing pleased him more than the deference of the foreman of the jury, who waylaid him to shake hands at the close of the trial. And since then no incautious British artists or critics have dared to tamper with Senefelder's definition of lithography.

CHAPTER XLI: THE END OF THE EDEN CASE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-NINE.

After our triumph Whistler went to Paris and Boldini painted his portrait, shown in the International Exhibition of 1900. It was done in a very few sittings. Mr. Kennedy, who went with Whistler, says that Boldini worked rapidly, that Whistler got tired of doing what he had made other people do all his life—pose—and took naps. During one of these Boldini made a dry-point on a zinc plate. Whistler did not like it, nor did he like any better Helleu's done at the same time. Of the painting Whistler said to us, "They say that looks like me, but I hope I don't look like that!" It is, however, a presentment of him in his worst mood, and Mr. Kennedy remembers that he was in his worst mood all the while. It is the Whistler whom the world knew and feared.

When Whistler came back to London, in May or June, he went to Garlant's Hotel, where Kennedy was staying. Mr. Kennedy's relations with Whistler commenced by his selling Whistler's prints and pictures in New York, and then developed into an intimate friendship, which continued until almost the end of Whistler's life. Kennedy was one of Whistler's champions in America, devoted and loyal, though the friendship ended rather abruptly through a regrettable misunderstanding. After Whistler's death, Kennedy was mainly responsible for the Grolier Club exhibition and catalogue.

This summer Whistler went to Hampton, where Mr. Heinemann had taken a cottage. Whistler never liked the country, but, he said, "I suppose now we'll have to fish for the little gudgeon together from a chair, with painted corks, like the other Britons."

He took part in the fun. He went to regattas, picnicked, and was rowed and punted about. At Hampton he met Mr. William Nicholson, whom Mr. Heinemann had asked down with the idea of his adding a portrait of Whistler to the series that began with his woodcut of Queen Victoria in the *New Review*. Later Mr. Nicholson, in the Fitzroy Street studio, made a study of Whistler in evening dress, recalling the *Sarasate*, and it appeared in the *Review*.

It was the summer of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Whistler could not come to us from Garlant's without passing through streets hung with tawdry wreaths and draggled festoons; Trafalgar Square buried in platforms, seats, and advertisements, Nelson on his column peering above. The decorations were an unfailing amusement to him, an excuse for an estimate of "the Island and the Islander," and the talk about the British, an annoyance, we are afraid, to some of his friends and more of his enemies. One evening he sketched for us his impression of the Square, with Nelson "boarded at last." "You see," he said, "England expects every Englishman to be ridiculous," and the sketch appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*.

He again went to the Naval Review, and this time saw it from Mr. George Vanderbilt's yacht. No etchings were made, though we believe he did a water-colour or pastel. Instead, he wrote some of his saddest letters, yet he said with a gleam of glee: "It was wonderful, just like Spain, just like Velasquez at some great function, for there was Philip," whom Mr. Vanderbilt resembled, as the portrait proved

till he changed and ruined it. "There was the Queen, Mrs. Vanderbilt; there was I, the Court Painter, and, why, even the dwarfs," as he described appropriately two well-known Americans on board.

In July we proposed to cycle across France to Switzerland, and the night before we started Whistler, M. Boldini, and Mr. Kennedy dined with us to say good-bye. Boldini was leaving London the next day, and by the end of the evening Whistler made up his mind to come as far as Dieppe, and as he would never, if he could help it, go alone, he decided that Mr. Kennedy must come too. Next morning we all arrived at the station save Whistler. Even his baggage came, but not till we were reduced almost to nervous collapse, not till the train was starting, did he saunter unmoved—his straw hat over his eyes—down the platform, followed humbly by the pompous station-master and amazed porters, looking for our carriage. No sooner had we started than he was in the best of spirits and enjoyed every minute of the journey, most when on the boat he found a camp of enemies also on the way to Dieppe, to his delight and their discomfort. At Dieppe we had to get our bicycles through the customs, the others took a cab, and when we reached the hotel we were received regally and given a whole suite, Boldini having hinted to the *patron* we were royalty travelling incognito, they in attendance. Almost at once Whistler got out his little colour-box and started for a shop front in a narrow street he knew. But first he had to find another kind of shop where he could buy a rosette of the Legion of Honour, for his had been lost or forgotten, and he would have thought it wanting in respect to appear without it in France. The shopkeeper, to whom he explained, said, "All right, *monsieur*, here is the rosette, but I have heard that story before." Whistler was furious, but in the end had to laugh. His dread of illness was again shown, for Beardsley, dying, was in the town, and without knowing it we passed his window and Beardsley saw us. When afterwards we called, Whistler refused to come, and it was well he did. Beardsley, however, was not the only person in Dieppe Whistler would not meet.

We had only our cycling costumes, we were staying at the Hotel Royal. When he came down to dinner, very late of course, he was correct in evening dress, the rosette in place, and we thought there

was a suggestion of hesitation, but it was only a suggestion. He gave his arm to E., who was in short cycling skirt, J. in knickerbockers, and as we went into the dining-room he turned to her, and, to a question that had never been asked, answered clearly, "*Mais oui, Princesse,*" and after that he had all the attention he wanted. Every tourist stared, and we were escorted to our seats by the *patron*, and for the rest of the evening, when he was not talking to the *Princesse*, he was giving good advice to the head waiter. The evening and the night were diversified periodically by Boldini's practical jokes, which did not keep Whistler from being down early in the morning to see us off. "Well, you know, can't I hold something?" he offered, as E. mounted her bicycle, and as he watched us wheel along the sea-front, he told Mr. Kennedy, "After all, O'K., . . . there's something in it!" We asked Mr. Kennedy to pay our bill, and M. Boldini had some trouble with his. The result was that when Whistler and Kennedy counted up their joint funds, they found they had just about enough money to get back to London, and they left.

In the autumn Whistler was in Paris, the Eden case in the Cour de Cassation being fixed for November 17. It was heard before Président Périvier, Maître Beurdeley for the second time defending Whistler. Mr. Heinemann came from London, and was with him in court. Judgment was given on December 2. The affair had been talked about, and the court was crowded. The judgment went as entirely in Whistler's favour as, in the Lower Court, it had gone against him. He was to keep the picture, on condition that he made it unrecognisable as a portrait of Lady Eden, which had been done; Sir William Eden was to have the hundred guineas back, which already had been returned and 5 per cent. interest; Whistler was to pay one thousand francs damages with interest and the cost of the first trial, and "the Baronet" to pay the costs of appeal. Mr. MacMonnies, who also was with Whistler in court, remembers that "it was decided by the judges that the picture should be produced when needed. Mr. Whistler whispered in my ear, 'MacMonnies, take the picture and get out with it.' As we sat under the judges' noses, and the court-room was packed with admirers and enemies and court officials, I made a distinct spot as I walked down the aisle with *the* picture under my arm. And Whistler showed his admirable generalship in the case, as not one of the *gendarmes*

could stop me. So all anybody could do was to watch it disappear out of the door."

Whistler said to us that the *Procureur de la République* was splendid ; that the whole affair was a public recognition of his position ; that the trial made history, established a precedent, proving the right of the artist to his own work ; that a new clause had been added to the *Code Napoléon* ; that he had " wiped up the floor " with " the Baronet " before all Paris, his intention from the first. He wished it to be known that in the law of France he would go down with Napoleon :

" Well, you know, take my word for it, Joseph, the first duty of a good general when he has won his battle is to say so, otherwise the people, always dull—the Briton especially—fail to understand, and it is an unsettled point in history for ever. Victory is not complete until the wounded are looked after and the dead counted."

The trial over, he wanted immediately to make a beautiful little book of it, and he began to arrange the report with his " Reflections " for publication. During many months proofs of *The Baronet and the Butterfly* filled his pockets. As he had read pages of *The Ten O'Clock* to Mr. Alan S. Cole, so he read pages of *The Baronet and the Butterfly* to us, and sometimes to the Council of the International after the meetings, a mistake, for there were members who had not the intelligence to understand it or him. His care was no less than with *The Gentle Art.* Every note, every Butterfly, was thought out and placed properly. " Beautiful, you know. Isn't it beautiful ? " he would say, when a page or a paragraph pleased him, and nothing pleased him more than the Butterfly following the " Reflection " on page 43. There he quotes George Moore : " I undertook a journey to Paris in the depth of winter, had two shocking passages across the Channel *and spent twenty-five pounds.* All this worry is the commission I received for my trouble in the matter."

Whistler's " Reflection " was : " Why, damme, sir ! he must have had a Valentine himself—the sea-saddened expert." This was followed by the Butterfly, " splendid—actually rolling back with laughter, you know ! "

A new feature was the toad printed over the Dedication : " To those *confrères* across the Channel who, refraining from intrusive demonstration, with a pluck and delicacy all their own ' sat tight '

during the struggle, these decrees of the judges are affectionately dedicated."

Below, a Butterfly bows and sends its sting to England. The tiny toad is the only realistic drawing in his books, and to make it realistic he needed a model. He thought of applying at the Zoological Gardens, was promised one by Mr. Wimbush, a painter in the same house, and finally his step-son, Mr. E. Godwin, found one. He put the toad in a paper box, forgot all about it, and was shocked when he heard it was dead.

"You know, they say I starved it. Well, it must have caught a fly or two, and I thought toads lived in stone or amber—or something—for hundreds of years—don't you know the stories? Perhaps it was because I hadn't the amber!"

The Baronet and the Butterfly was published in Paris by Henry May, May 13, 1899. Whistler objected to the date, but on the 13th it appeared, and the result justified his superstition. It did not attract much attention. When we saw him in Paris that month he seemed to think the fault was with the critics who were keeping up the played-out business of "misunderstanding and misrepresentation." But the interest in the Eden trial had never been as great as he fancied, and the report is dull reading, because there were no witnesses and so no cross-examination which would in England have given him the opportunity of "scalping" his victim. The Ruskin trial in *The Gentle Art* is full of Whistler's answers in court; *The Baronet and the Butterfly* is made up of the speeches of advocates and judges. In the marginal notes, the Dedication, the Argument, he is brilliant and witty, and the Butterfly as gay as ever. There is no Whistler in the speeches, that is the trouble.

The book was one of many schemes that occupied him during these years. The International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers was organised, and the *Atelier Carmen* in Paris was planned, both so important that their history is reserved for other chapters. A venture from which he hoped great things was his endeavour to dispense with the middleman in art. Hitherto he had been glad to trust his affairs to dealers. "I will lay the golden eggs, you will supply the incubator," he told one, whose version of the arrangement was that when the incubator was ready Whistler would not give up the golden eggs. He could

not reconcile himself to the large sums gained by buying and selling his work since 1892. Over the sale of old work he had no control; the sale of new he determined to keep in his hands. He would be his own agent, set up his own shop, form a trust in Whistlers. We think it was in 1896 he first spoke to us about it, delighted, sure he was to succeed financially at last. In 1897 rumours were spread of a "Whistler Syndicate." In 1898 advertisements of the "Company of the Butterfly" appeared in the *Athenæum*—the Company composed, as far as we knew, of James McNeill Whistler. Two rooms were taken on the first floor at No. 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square, close to the Wallace Gallery. They were charming. A few prints were hung. A picture or two stood on easels. To go to Whistler in the studio for his work was one thing; it was quite another to go to a shop run by no one knew who, half the time shut, and deserted when open. We doubt if anything was ever sold there, we never saw a visitor in the place. Soon the rooms were turned over to Mr. Heinemann for a show of Mr. Nicholson's colour-prints, and after that no more was heard of the "Company of the Butterfly."

There was another reason for starting it. So many people came to the studio for so many reasons that he had to keep them out, and his idea was that those who wanted to buy pictures should go to the "Company of the Butterfly," and buy them there without interrupting him. But no shop could dispose of the constant visits from the curious, from photographers asking for his portrait, journalists begging for an interview, literary people anxious to make articles or books about him. They would write to arrange a certain hour and appear without waiting for a reply. One, who had written to say he was coming with a letter of introduction, on his arrival found the door fastened and heard Whistler whistling inside, and that was all the indignant visitor heard or saw of him. There is a story of an American collector who, calling one day when not wanted, and after wasting much time, asked:

"How much for the whole lot, Mr. Whistler?"

"Five millions."

"What?"

"My posthumous prices!"

And there are stories of Whistler's ways of meeting the hordes who tried to force themselves into the studio. Mr. Eddy tells one:

STUDY IN BROWN

OIL

In the possession of the Baroness de Meyer

(*See page* 359)

STUDY OF THE NUDE

PEN DRAWING

In the possession of William Heinemann, Esq.

(*See page* 360)

" An acquaintance had brought, without invitation, a friend, ' a distinguished and clever woman,' to the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. They reached the door, both out of breath from their long climb. ' Ah, my dear Whistler,' drawled C——, ' I have taken the liberty of bringing Lady D—— to see you. I knew you would be delighted.' ' Delighted, I'm sure ! Quite beyond expression, but '—mysteriously, and holding the door so as to bar their entrance—' my dear Lady D——, I would never forgive our friend for bringing you up six flights of stairs on so hot a day to visit a studio at one of these—eh—pagan moments when '—and he glanced furtively behind him, and still further closed the door—' it is absolutely impossible for a lady to be received. Upon my soul, I should never forgive him.' And Whistler bowed them down from the top of the six flights and returned to the portrait of a very sedate old gentleman who had taken advantage of the interruption to break for a moment the rigour of his pose."

The " Company of the Butterfly " never relieved him of the visitors who were more eager to see him than his work. But this he did not discover until he had devoted to the venture far more time than he had to spare during the crowded years of its existence.

CHAPTER XLII: BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN TO NINETEEN HUNDRED.

After his marriage Whistler was unfortunate in his choice of apartments and studios. The Studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, on the sixth floor, was the worst for a man with a weak heart to climb to ; the apartment in the Rue du Bac, low and damp, was as bad for a man who caught cold easily. He was constantly ill during the winter of 1897–98, which he passed mostly in Paris. Influenza kept him in bed in November, from January to March he was dull and listless as never before, save in Venice after the *scirocco* ; he said, " I am so tired—I who am never tired ! "

Whistler's heart, always weak, began to trouble him. He had been ill before, but, nervous as he was about his health, he never realised his

condition. We have known him, when too ill to work, get up out of bed in order to accomplish something important. A few years before, confined with quinsy to his brother's house, forced to write what he wished to say on a slate, when someone he did not want to see was announced, he forgot that he could not talk and yelled, "Send him away!" We have known, too, an invitation to dinner from a certain rich American to rout him out of bed and to cure him temporarily. It was this endeavour never to be ill, never to give in, that was one of the causes of his final breakdown. Illness suggested death, and no man ever shrank more from the thought or mention of death than Whistler. There was in life so much for him to do, so little time in which to do it. He would tell his brother it was useless for doctors to know so much if they had not discovered the elixir of life. "Why not try to find it?" he asked the Doctor. "Isn't it in the heart of the unknown? It must be there."

In the studio he worked harder than ever. Illness made him foresee that his time was short, and he was goaded by the thought of the things to finish. When he was in London we were distressed by his fatigue at the end of the day, but he said he was like the old cart-horse that could keep going as long as it was in traces, but must drop the minute it was free. While he was in Paris, his letters were full of the "amazing things" going on in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. He said: "Really, you know, I could almost laugh at the extraordinary progress I am making, and the lovely things I am inventing—work beyond anything I have ever done before."

He was only beginning to know and to understand, he told us. All that had gone before was experimental.

There were new portraits. In 1897 he had begun one of Mr. George Vanderbilt—"The Modern Philip"—a full-length in riding habit, whip in hand, standing against a dark background. The canvas was sent from Paris to London, just as Whistler and Vanderbilt happened to be in one place or the other. Not one of his portraits of men interested Whistler so much; certainly not one was finer when we first saw it in London, but it was a wreck in the Paris Memorial Exhibition of 1905. Like others of this period, it had been worked over. He painted Mrs. Vanderbilt, *Ivory and Gold*, shown in the *Salon* of 1902, one of the first of the several ovals he was now doing. Carmen, his model, sat.

Portraits started a year or so later were of his brother-in-law, Mr. Birnie Philip, and of Mr. Elwell, an American painter whom he had known for some time. In May 1898, in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, he showed us the full-length of himself in long overcoat, called *Gold and Brown* in the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900 and, as we have said, never seen afterward. We own a pen-drawing he made of it. It was far from successful, and before he finished it Miss Marian Draughn, an American, began to pose for him—his " Coon Girl " he called her. She was sent to him by Gibson and Phil May.

He painted many children. He loved children. Ernest G. Brown remembered Whistler's thoughtfulness and consideration when his daughter sat for *Pretty Nelly Brown*, one of the most beautiful of the series. We have the same story from Mr. Croal Thomson, of whose daughter, *Little Evelyn*, Whistler made a lithograph. When he went to her father's house at Highgate, Evelyn would run to meet him with outstretched hands, her face lifted to be kissed, and while he worked the other children would come and look on. Mr. Alan S. Cole has told us that once Whistler found his three little daughters decorating the drawing-room and hanging up a big welcome in flowers for their mother, who was to return. He forgot what he had come for and helped, as eager and excited as they, and stayed until Mrs. Cole arrived. He was walking from the Paris studio one day with Mrs. Clifford Addams and saw some children playing ; he made her stop, " I must look at the babbies," he said, " you know, I love the babbies ! " Later, during his last illness, he liked to have Mrs. Addams' own little girl, Diane, in the studio. And there are portraits of Brandon Thomas' baby and *Master Stephen Manuel* that show his pleasure in painting his small sitters. The children of the street adored him ; the children of Chelsea and Fitzroy Street, who were used to artists, knew him well. There was one he was for ever telling us about, of five or six, who frightened while she fascinated him. " I likes whusky," she confided one day when she was posing, " and I likes Scoatch best ! " She described her Christmas at home : " Father 'e was drunk, mother was drunk, sister was drunk, I was drunk, and we made the cat drunk, too ! " A still younger child gave him sittings, a baby of not more than three, the model for many of the pastels. She and her mother were resting one afternoon, Whistler watching her every movement. " Really," he said, " you are a beauti-

ful little thing!" She looked up at him, "Yes, I is, Whistler," she lisped. And there is the old story: "Where did you come from, Mr. Whistler?" "I came from on high, my dear." "H'm, never should have thought it," said the child; "shows how we can deceive ourselves." But his popularity with children did not help him one Sunday afternoon, the only time it is possible to sketch with comfort in the City, when he went with J. to make a study of Clerkenwell Church tower, which was about to be restored. They drove to the church, but the light was bad and the colour not right, so they wandered off to Cloth Fair—until a little while ago the most perfect, really the only, bit of old London. Though Whistler had worked there many times, this afternoon the children did not approve of him. After a short encounter in which they, as always, got the better, Whistler and J. retired to another cab, followed by any refuse that came handy. But the children he painted, *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis*, *The Little Lady Sophie of Soho*, *Lillie in our Alley*, the small Italian waifs and strays, were his friends, and no painter ever gave the grace and feeling of childhood, or of girlhood as in *Miss Woakes*, more sympathetically.

He was as absorbed in a series of nudes. Few of his paintings towards the end satisfied him so entirely as the small *Phryne the Superb*, *Builder of Temples*, which he sent to the International in 1901 and to the *Salon* in 1902. The first time he showed it to us he asked:

"Would she be more superb—more truly the builder of Temples—had I painted her what is called life-size by the foolish critics who bring out their foot-rule? Is it a question of feet and inches when you look at her?"

He intended to paint an Eve, an Odalisque, a Bathsheba, and a Danaë, the designs to be enlarged on canvas by his apprentices, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Addams, but this was never done. Suggestions were in the pastels of figures, for which he found the perfect model in London. When not in the studio, he kept sketching her from memory, and he was in despair when she married and went to some remote colony, but before she went he gave her some beautiful silver. These pastels are many and perfect. They are drawings on brown paper—studies or impressions of the model in infinite poses. In some she stands with her filmy draperies floating about her or falling in long, straight folds to her feet; in others she lies upon a couch, indolent and lovely;

BLUE AND CORAL
THE LITTLE BLUE BONNET
OIL
Formerly in the possession of Wm. Heinemann, Esq.

(*See page* 361)

ROSE AND GOLD
LITTLE LADY SOPHIE OF SOHO

OIL

In the Charles L. Freer Collection, National Gallery of American Art

(*See page* 362)

she dances across the paper, she bends over a great bowl, she sits with her slim legs crossed and a cup of tea in her hand, she holds a fan or a flower; but whatever she may be doing or however she may rest, she is but another expression of the beauty that haunted Whistler, the beauty that was the inspiration of the *Harmonies in White* and the *Six Projects*. Many poses are suggested in lithographs, etchings, and water-colours; none show greater tenderness than when she returned with her child. He put his own tenderness into the encircling hands of the mother holding the baby on her knee, he found the most rhythmic lines when, standing, she balanced herself to clasp the child the more closely to her. Nothing could be slighter than the means by which the effect is produced, the figures drawn in black upon the brown paper, the colour—blue, or rose, or violet—suggested in the gauzy draperies or the cap or handkerchief knotted about the curls. But they have the exquisiteness of Tanagra figures and are as complete.

All this work was done with feverish concern about mediums and materials and methods. He usually sat now as he worked, and he wore spectacles, sometimes two pairs, one over the other. He was never so thoughtful in the preparation of his colours and his canvas. At last the knowledge was coming to him, he said again and again. And he was never more successful in obtaining the unity and harmony he had always sought, in hiding the labour by which it was obtained and in giving to his painting the beauty of surface he prized so highly. Because in painting he tried to carry on the same subject, the same tradition, superficial critics accused him of repeating himself, or mistook his later for earlier works, like the critic of the *Times* who, in writing of his pictures at the International Society's Exhibition of 1898, referred to "old works . . . among which *The Little Blue Bonnet* is the least known," a remark Whistler printed in the *édition de luxe* of the catalogue, with the explanation that the painting had come "fresh from the easel to its first exhibition," and that therefore "the 'plain man' is, once more, profoundly right, and we see again the advantage of memory over mere artistic instinct in the critic." The small portraits and marines of the nineties are as fine as anything he ever did. The fact that for all these pictures he used frames of the same size and the same design helped—unintentionally on his part—to confuse critics accustomed

to the flamboyant vulgarity, utter inappropriateness, and complete indifference to scale in the frames of most painters. But then there are not half a dozen painters in a generation who have the faintest idea of decoration. Whistler, Puvis de Chavannes, and John La Farge are almost the only decorators whose names may be mentioned among moderns. Though some of Whistler's portraits are more elaborate, not one is more powerful or more masterly as a study of character, and therefore more individual, than *The Master Smith of Lyme Regis*. When it is contrasted with *The Little Rose*, the embodiment of simple, sweet, healthy childhood, and *The Little Lady Sophie of Soho* and *Lillie in our Alley*, the sickly atmosphere of the slums reflected in their strange beauty, and these again with the exuberant colour and life of *Carmen*, there can be no question of the variety in Whistler's later work, though a certain manner, that might have grown into mannerism, became more marked. There was a similarity in the general design. Most were heads and half-lengths, and, except in the finest, nose, eyes, and mouth were alike in character, and hands were badly drawn and clumsily put in. The colour was beautiful and he exulted in it, but at the very last he must have known as well as anybody that his power of work was leaving him.

Whistler spent the summer of 1898 chiefly in London, going first to Mr. Heinemann's at Whitehall Court, then to Garlant's Hotel. The delightful evenings of the year before began again for us, and there was a fresh interest for him in the war between the United States and Spain. "It was a wonderful and beautiful war," he thought, "the Spaniards were gentlemen," and his pockets were filled with newspaper clippings to prove it. If we pointed out a blunder on the part of our soldiers, if we gave chance a share in our victories, he was furious :

"Why say if any but Spaniards had been at the top of San Juan, we never would have got there ? Why question the *if ?* The facts are all that count. No fight could be more beautifully managed. I am telling you ! I, a West Point man, know. What if Cervera did get whipped ? What if he was pulled up from the sea looking like a wad of cotton that had been soaked in an ink-bottle ? What of it ? Didn't the whole United States Navy, headed by the admirals, receive him as the Commander of the Spanish Fleet should be received ? "

He was going out more and seeing more people. But his interest

in society was less, and evidently he preferred the quiet of the evenings with us. Chance encounters in our flat were often an entertainment. One we recall most vividly was with Frederick Sandys, whom he had not met for thirty years. Sandys was with us in the late afternoon when Whistler knocked his exaggerated postman's knock that could not be mistaken, followed by the resounding peal of the bell. They gave each only a chilly recognition and sat down. Sandys was agitated, but there was no escape. Whistler looked like Boldini's portrait, but soon they began to talk, and they talked till the early hours of the morning as if they were back at Rossetti's, Sandys in the white waistcoat with gold buttons, but bent with age, Whistler straight and erect, but wrinkled and grey.

He returned to Paris late in the autumn, settling there for the winter. Except for his attacks of illness, there was but one interruption to his work. Mr. Heinemann was married at Porto d'Anzio in February 1899, and Whistler went to Italy as best man. This was his only visit to Rome. He was disappointed. To us he described the city as "a bit of an old ruin alongside of a railway station where I saw Mrs. Potter Palmer." And he added:

"Rome was awful—a hard sky all the time, a glaring sun and a strong wind. After I left the railway station, there were big buildings more like Whiteley's than anything I expected in the Eternal City. St. Peter's was fine, with its great yellow walls, the interior too big, perhaps, but you had only got to go inside to know where Wren got his ideas—how he, well, you know, robbed Peter's to build Paul's! And I liked the Vatican, the Swiss Guards, great big fellows, lolling about, as in Dumas; they made you think of D'Artagnan, Aramis, and the others. And Michael Angelo? A tremendous fellow, yes; the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, interesting as pictures, but with all the legs and arms of the figures sprawling everywhere, I could not see the decoration. There can be no decoration without repose; a tremendous fellow, but not so much in the David and other things I was shown in Rome and Florence as in that one unfinished picture at the National Gallery. There is often elegance in the *loggie* of Raphael, but the big frescoes of the *stanze* did not interest me."

Velasquez's portrait of *Innocent X.* in the Doria Palace he, apparently, did not see.

During the journey to Porto d'Anzio, Princess ——, one of the

wedding guests, who heard vaguely that Whistler was an artist, inquired of him :

" *Monsieur fait de la peinture, n'est-ce pas ?* "

" *Oui, Princesse.*"

" *On me l'avait dit. Moi aussi, j'en fais, Monsieur.*"

" *Charmant, Princesse, nous sommes des collègues.*"

On the way back from Rome Whistler stopped at Florence, and of his stay there Mr. J. Kerr-Lawson wrote us the account :

" The McNeill has been here and just gone—we had him lightly on our hands all day yesterday.

" We didn't ' do ' Florence, for there was a fierce glaring sun and a horrible *Tramontana* raging, so we spent the best of the morning trying to write a letter in the rococo manner to the Syndic of Murano quite unsuccessfully. [This was after the awards in the Venice International Exhibition.]

" After luncheon I took him down to the Uffizi. We seemed to be the only people rash enough to brave the awful wind, for we saw no one in the Gallery but a frozen *Guardia.* He—poor fellow—was brushed aside by a magnificent and truly awe-inspiring gesture as we approached that battered and begrimed portrait in which Velasquez still looks out upon the world which he has mastered with an expression of superbly arrogant scorn in the Portrait Gallery.

" It was a dramatic moment—the flat-brimmed *chapeau de haut forme* came off with a grand sweep and was deposited on a stool, and then the Master, standing back about six feet from the picture and drawing himself up to much more than his own full natural height, with his left hand upon his breast and the right thrust out magisterially, exclaimed, ' *Quelle allure !* ' Then you should have seen him. After the solemn act of homage, when he had resumed his hat, we relaxed considerably over the lesser immortals of this crazy and incongruous Valhalla—what an ill-assorted company ! How did they all get together ? Liotard, the Swiss, jostles Michael Angelo, Giuseppe MacPherson rubs shoulders with Titian, Herkomer hangs beside Ingres, and Poynter is a pendant to Sir Joshua. There are the greatest and the least, the noblest and the meanest brought together by the capricious folly of succeeding directors and harmonised by that touch of vanity that makes the whole world kin.

"One wonders whom they will ask next. Certainly not Whistler. They knew quite well he was here, but not the slightest notice was taken of him. *En revanche*, every now and then some vulgar mediocrity passes this way, and then the foolish Florentines are lavish with their laurels."

Whistler had not been long dead when J. received an inspired letter from Florence asking him if he could obtain Whistler's portrait for the Uffizi. His answer was that had they appreciated Whistler they might have asked him while he was alive, but as they had not had the sense or the courage to do so, they had better apply to his executrix. As yet there is no portrait of Whistler in the Uffizi.

After absences from his studio Whistler discovered again that pictures and prints were disappearing. It worried him, and he tried to trace and recover them. We have little doubt that, at times, Whistler lost prints through his carelessness. We know that once his method of drying his etchings between sheets of blotting paper thrown on the floor was disastrous. One morning an artist came to see us bringing a number of beautiful proofs of the second Venice Set, in sheets of blotting paper as he had bought them from an old rag and paper man in Red Lion Passage, who thought they could be no good because the margins were cut down and so sold them for a shilling apiece. The artist admitted that he did not care for them, and we offered him half-a-crown. "Oh," he said, "as you are willing to give that, now I shall find out what they are really worth." He got sixty pounds for them, but several of the prints separately have since sold for much more. Accidents like this would account for some of the things Whistler thought were stolen. A few works that had disappeared were recovered during his lifetime. But shortly after his death there was a sale at the Hôtel Drouot in which missing paintings, drawings, plates, prints, and even letters were dispersed. Only those who were near him can realise how much this troubled and annoyed him during his last years. At the same time he began to suffer from another of the evils of success. Pictures, somewhat resembling his and attributed to him appeared at auctions, and others were sent to him for identification or signature by persons who had purchased them. If he knew beforehand that one of these fakes was coming up in the auction-room, he would send and try to stop the sale, or, if submitted to him, he would not give it back. Neither

expedient met with marked success. At present there is a factory of Whistlers in full operation, while oils and water-colours and drawings ascribed to him without the slightest reason have been openly sold at auction, despite the protests made against such swindles.

Whistler could not stay long from London, and the early summer of 1899 saw him back at Garlant's and visiting Mr. Heinemann at Weybridge. He was in town for the sequel to the Eden affair. He heard that, on July 15, there was to be a sale of Sir William Eden's pictures at Christie's. He went to it and came to us afterwards.

"Really, it has been beautiful. I know you will enjoy it. It occurred to me in the morning—the Baronet's sale to-day—h'm—the Butterfly should see how things are going! And I went home, and I changed my morning dress, my dandy straw hat, and then, very correct and elegant, I sauntered down King Street into Christie's. At the top of the stairway someone spoke to me. 'Well, you know, my dear friend,' I said, 'I do not know who you are, but you shall have the honour of taking me in.' And on his arm I walked into the big room. The auctioneer was crying, 'Going! Going! Thirty shillings! Going!' 'Ha ha!' I laughed—not loudly, not boisterously; it was very delicately, very neatly done. But the room was electrified. Some of the henchmen were there; they grow rigid, afraid to move, afraid to glance my way out of the corners of their eyes. 'Twenty shillings! Going!' the auctioneer would cry. 'Ha ha!' I would laugh, and things went for nothing and the henchman trembled. Louis Fagan came across the room to speak to me—Fagan, representing the British Museum, as it were, was quite the most distinguished man there. And now, having seen how things were, I took Fagan's arm. 'You,' I said, 'may have the honour of taking me out.'"

He dined with us the next evening and found Mr. Harry Wilson, whose brother-in-law, Mr. Sydney Morse, was the friend upon whose arm Whistler had entered the auction-room. Mr. Wilson was full of the story, and confirmed the "electric shock" when Whistler appeared.

He ran over to Holland once during the summer. Part of the time he was at Pourville, near Dieppe, where he had taken a house for Miss Birnie Philip and her mother. The sea was on the right side at Dieppe, of which he never tired; at Madame Lefèvre's restaurant he could

get as good a breakfast as in Paris ; and many small marines, oils, and water-colours were done before bad weather drove him away.

Though it is not always easy to identify the place or the time to which his small marines belong, for they cover a number of years, probably more were made at Dieppe than anywhere else. When he did not care to work from the shore there were boatmen who would take him out beyond the breakers, where he could get the effect he wished at the height above the water that suited him. He used to be seen calmly painting away in a dancing row-boat, the boatman holding it as steadily as he could. There is as much of the bigness of the ocean in these little paintings, which show usually only the grey or blue or green, but ever recurring, swell of the wave, or a quiet sea with two or three sails on the horizon, as in any big marines that ever were painted. He explained his method to his apprentice, Mrs. Addams. When the wave broke and the surf made a beautiful line of white, he painted this at once, then all that completed the beauty of the breaking wave, then the boat passing, and then, having got the movement and the beauty that goes almost as soon as it comes, he put in the shore or the horizon.

In Paris, during the winter of 1899–1900, he took two small rooms at the Hôtel Chatham, where the last three years he had often stayed, afraid to risk the dampness of the Rue du Bac. But they were inner rooms with no light and scarcely any ventilation, though most swell and more expensive, unless, perhaps, the lady who used to come to massage him was included. He had fewer friends in Paris than in London, and he was often lonely. He would go to see Drouet and say, "*Tu sais, je suis ennuyé.*" And Drouet, to amuse him, would get up little dinners, at which all who were left of the old group of students met again. One was given in honour of Becquet, whom Whistler had etched almost half a century before. A wreath of laurels was prepared. During dinner Drouet said he had met many great men, but, *pour la morale*, none greater than Becquet, who was moved to tears, and the laurel wreath was offered to him by Whistler, and Becquet fairly broke down ; he "would hang it on the walls of his studio, always to have it before him," he said.

Once Drouet took Whistler to the fair at Neuilly, made him ride in a merry-go-round. Whistler lost his hat, dropped his eye-glass. "What would London journalists say if they could see me now ? "

he asked. They generally dined at Beaujé's, in the Passage des Panoramas, to which Drouet and other artists, literary men, and barristers went. Whistler renewed his intimacy with Oulevey, whom he had barely seen since the early Paris days. Madame Oulevey's memories are, above all, of Whistler's dining with them in the Passage des Favorites at the other end of the Rue Vaugirard, when he wore his pumps and, a storm coming up and not a cab to be found in their quarter, and they had to keep him for hours. His pumps left an impression on Drouet, too, who was sure it was because Whistler wore them by day and could not walk in them that he was so often seen driving through the streets in a cab. And he seemed so tired then, Drouet said, half the time lying back, fast asleep. Fantin, the most intimate of his early associates, he met but once and then by chance.

In February news came of the death of his brother, Doctor Whistler. Alexander Harrison writes us :

" I chanced to call upon him half an hour after he had received the news and, with a quivering voice and tears in his eyes, he told me that he considered me a friend and told me his sad loss and asked me to dine with him."

The two brothers had been devoted since boyhood, and Whistler felt the Doctor's death acutely. It made him the more ready to rejoin his friends in London, and two months later found him staying with Mr. Heinemann, who had moved from Whitehall Court to Norfolk Street.

There E. dined to meet him the evening after his arrival. Mr. Arthur Symons gives, in his *Studies in Seven Arts*, his impression of the dinner, and of Whistler :

" I never saw anyone so feverishly alive as this little old man, with his bright withered cheeks, over which a skin was drawn tightly, his darting eyes, under their prickly bushes of eyebrow, his fantastically creased black and white curls of hair, his bitter and subtle mouth, and, above all, his exquisite hands, never at rest."

To us the idea of his age was never present. He seemed the youngest wherever he was. But to those who saw him for the first time it was evident that he was growing old. And he had been before the public for so long that people got an exaggerated idea of his age. Mr. Symons continues :

MODEL WITH FLOWERS

PASTEL

In the possession of J. P. Heseltine, Esq.

(*See page* 360)

GIRL WITH A RED FEATHER

OIL

"Some person officially connected with art was there, an urbane sentimentalist; and after every official platitude there was a sharp crackle from Whistler's corner, and it was as if a rattlesnake had leapt suddenly out."

When the "urbane sentimentalist" remarked that "there never was such a thing as an art-loving people, an artistic period," Whistler said: "Dear me! It's very flattering to find that I have made you see at last. But really, you know, I shall have to copyright my little things after this!"

When someone objected to the good manners of the French, because they were all on the surface, Whistler suggested, "Well, you know, a very good place to have them."

CHAPTER XLIII: THE INTERNATIONAL. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE.

That artists should hold Exhibitions of International Art was Whistler's idea. He had always hoped for a gallery where he could show his work in his own way with the work of men in sympathy with him. Often, and years before, he talked to us of this. It mattered little to him where the gallery should be, in New York or London, Paris or Berlin: the exhibition should not be local or national, but an Art Congress for the artists of the world. This was his aim. The men whom he wished to have associated with him lived mostly in London, where now the greater part of his time was spent, and London seemed the place for the first exhibition. He and Mr. E. A. Walton tried to lease the Grosvenor Gallery, and when they failed they turned to the Grafton. But again there were difficulties, and nothing definite was done until 1897, when a young journalist, who was painting, Mr. Francis Howard, conceived the idea of promoting a company to hold an exhibition at Prince's Skating Club, Knightsbridge. As the artists were to incur no financial responsibilities and to have complete artistic control, Whistler consented to co-operate. The first meeting, the minutes record, was on December 23, 1897, and John Lavery, E. A. Walton, G. Sauter, and Francis Howard

were present. Whistler, who had been consulted, at first agreed that members of the Royal Academy and other artistic bodies should be admitted, and at the second meeting, February 7, 1898, Mr. Alfred Gilbert, R.A., took the chair. A circular, unsigned and undated, was then issued calling attention to a proposed exhibition of International Art, and on it appeared the names of James McNeill Whistler, Alfred Gilbert, Frederick Sandys, John Lavery, James Guthrie, Arthur Melville, Charles W. Furse, Charles Ricketts, C. Hazlewood Shannon, E. A. Walton, Joseph Farquharson, Maurice Greiffenhagen, Will Rothenstein, G. Sauter, Francis Howard. It stated, with a clumsiness Whistler could hardly have passed had he seen the circular beforehand, that the object of the Society was the much-needed " organisation in London of Exhibitions of the finest Art of the time . . . the non-recognition of nationality in Art, and the hanging and placing of works irrespective of such consideration. . . . The Exhibitions, filling as they will an unoccupied place in the cosmopolitan ground of International Art, will not be in opposition to existing institutions."

An Executive Council appointed itself, and on February 16, 1898, Whistler was unanimously elected Chairman. The most distinguished artists of every nationality were invited to join an Honorary Council. The Executive, to which J., on Whistler's nomination, was elected in March, was to have entire charge of the affairs of the exhibition. There were to be no ordinary members, but only honorary members by invitation.

Jealousies and preferences immediately crept in. Mr. Gilbert resigned, which was much to be regretted, and several other English members withdrew from the Council, which speedily became as international as the name of the society, the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers, into which it formed itself two months later (April 23), when officers were elected, and Whistler, proposed by Mr. Lavery and seconded by Mr. J. J. Shannon, was chosen President, Mr. Lavery Vice-President, and Mr. Francis Howard, Honorary Secretary.

The International was the second society of artists over which Whistler presided. Only ten years had passed since his resignation from the British Artists, but the change in his position before the world was great. The British Artists, an old and decrepit body, had

chosen him as President in the hope that his "notoriety" and his following of young men would bring the advertisement they needed; the International, a young, vigorous organisation, elected him because they knew that no other artist could give them such distinction and distinguished foreign artists such assurance that their work would be hung in a country where previously, through fear of competition and insular prejudice, it had been rejected. In the eighties Whistler was mistrusted; in the nineties he was acknowledged as one of the great artists of the century. The change in his position was not greater than his influence on contemporary art. This influence had been pointed out by the few for some years past. But the last decade had strengthened it until it could no longer be denied. The younger generation had accepted him in the meanwhile, admitted their debt to him, and proclaimed it openly in their work. The New English Art Club abjured subject and sentiment for the "painter's poetry" wherever it might lurk, whether in the London bus transformed by the London atmosphere, or in the *Lion-Comique*, transfigured on the music-hall stage; though, as Whistler once said, the New English Art Club was "only a raft," while the International was to be a "battleship" of which he would take command. The Glasgow School accepted his teaching and then copied his technique, in some cases pushing imitation to folly. But still, all that was healthiest and best in the art of the country came from these two groups, and members of both had made an international reputation before the International was founded. Even in the Academy anecdote had lost for an interval its pre-eminence, and it looked as if Academicians might begin to understand that the painter's sole object need not be to tell a story. Besides, there were two artists, R. A. M. Stevenson and J., writing upon art, and they taught young men to have faith in Whistler, and the "new criticism was born," and D. S. MacColl was the name of the first and only child.

Nor was Whistler's influence confined to England. From the early eighties, when the jury was becoming more representative at the old *Salon*, the pictures he sent to it had been hung. From the early nineties the new *Salon* gave them prominence. Other recent influences in France had waxed and waned. The realism of Bastien-Lepage, which sank into photography with painters of less accom-

plishment, and the square brush-mark were already *vieux jeu*. Impressionism had swamped itself in chemical problems, and the technique of the Impressionists had been degraded to the exaggerations and absurdities of the *Rose-Croix*, to be swamped in turn by the latest fad of all. Whistler brought with him technical sanity, a feeling for beauty and reverence for tradition, and he, who had been called the most eccentric of *poseurs* in paint, led the way back to dignity and reticence in art, from which he had never swerved. His example was revealed in the work of artists of every nationality, either by frank imitation or else by their attitude towards Nature or the reserve of their technique. Because of this universal recognition, he was best qualified for the Presidency of an International Society of Artists.

The honour was paid him by no official body. Officially, to the last, he was destined to go without due recognition. In France he was an ordinary *Sociétaire* of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*. The National Academy of Design in America was as indifferent to him as the Royal Academy in England. His membership in the Academies of Dresden, Munich, Rome, and Scotland was a compliment—a compliment he could and did appreciate—but it carried no responsibilities and required no active work, and almost all these honours came after the International was started. But the new society, if not official, included on its executive the strongest outsiders in Great Britain, and had the support of the most distinguished men of his profession throughout the world. Their choice of him was an acknowledgment of his supremacy as artist and an expression of confidence in him as leader, and he took no less pleasure in their tribute than trouble not to disappoint their expectations. His experience with the British Artists was a help in constituting the Society. The sole authority rested with the Executive Council, the members of which elected themselves and could not be got rid of except by their voluntary resignation or expulsion. Theoretically the idea was magnificent, if the narrowest and most autocratic. "Napoleon and I do these things," Whistler said, and Suffolk Street had taught him that an intelligent autocrat is the best leader possible. His policy, if autocratic, was broad. In most societies painting held a monopoly, but, in his, sculpture and "graving" should have equal importance. All his rules were far-seeing and practical, and the decline of the Society

since his death is due to the disregard of them: a disregard which his associates still on the Council who are true to his memory cannot prevent—or forget.

The first exhibition was opened in May 1898. The Skating Rink at Knightsbridge was divided into three large and two small galleries. Whistler's scheme of decoration was adopted, and the hanging was more perfect than any up to that time even on the Continent. The President's velarium, without question of patent, was used, and he designed the seal for the Society and the cover of the catalogue. The artistic success of the show could not be questioned. No such collection of modern art had been seen in London, a proof that Whistler was as broad as the painters and the populace were sure he was narrow. The "Why drag in Velasquez?" story is often quoted by the ignorant and the foolish and the stupid. In this Exhibition he dragged in everyone of eminence, for, though the ignorant and the foolish and the stupid may never understand, the "Why drag in Velasquez?" was uttered only for their benefit. Whistler showed a group of early pictures: *At the Piano*, *La Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine*, *Rosa Corder*, with later works: *The Philosopher*, *The Little Blue Bonnet*, his own half-length portrait in a white jacket, *Brown and Gold*. The sculpture was as interesting as the painting. There were drawings and engravings. Besides, his idea was to have special exhibitions, and Aubrey Beardsley, who had just died, was honoured. Before the show was over delegates were sent, and communications received, from Paris and Venice asking for an exchange of exhibitions.

Whistler came from Paris for the opening, a quiet affair as the endeavour to obtain the presence of the Prince of Wales failed, and he lunched with the Council on the opening day and attended one or two Sunday afternoon receptions. He agreed that a fine illustrated catalogue should be published by Mr. Heinemann, with *The Little Blue Bonnet*, in photogravure, as frontispiece. If the first exhibition was a complete artistic success it proved a complete financial failure. But luckily the Society had no pecuniary responsibility.

Whistler knew it is impossible for a man to serve actively in two rival societies; he had said so to the British Artists; and he determined that members of the Council of the International who were members of other societies must leave the Society, or, if not, he would.

His decision was precipitated by a new election to the Council. He was in Paris, and the fact that two members of the Council, Lavery and J., left London at an hour's notice for the Rue du Bac to arrange matters with him shows how anxious he was for the welfare of his Society. They arrived early in the morning. Whistler was not up, but sent word that they must breakfast with him in the studio. During breakfast he talked of everything but the Society; after breakfast he made them listen to a Fourth of July spread-eagle oration squeaked out of a primitive gramophone that somebody had given him and that he loved; and it was not until twenty minutes before they had to start back that he referred to the Council. Then he had all his plans ready, and he stated what he proposed to do, and what he wanted done, what must be done—we might add, what was done. And not only at every crisis, but in every detail, he directed the management of the Society, and he demanded that every report, every project should be submitted to him. He expected the deference due to him as President, and in return he gave his unswerving support. Even during his last illness nothing was done without his knowledge and approval.

The second International Exhibition, or "Art Congress," was held at Knightsbridge from May to July 1899. The President came over when the hanging was finished. It was arranged this year that a special show of his etchings should be made, and a small room was decorated and called the White Room. As Whistler was in Paris, he asked J. and Mrs. Whibley to go to the studio and select the prints. J. chose a number that had not been seen before, principally from the *Naval Review Series*. Whistler, for some reason, resented the selection when he saw the prints on the walls. The Committee were in consternation and sent for J. Whistler said to him:

"Now look what you have done!"

"But what have I done? Have I done you any harm?"

And that was the end of it. His objection may have been because he feared, as we remember his saying of these prints another time, that they were "beyond the understanding of the abomination outside." But his fury lasted only for the moment, and he and Lavery and J. passed a good part of the night at work in the gallery on the catalogue.

Whistler received on the opening day, and in the evening the first of the Round Table Council dinners was held at the Café Royal, Sir

James Guthrie presiding. In an admirable speech he expressed not only the delight of the Council at being able to enlist the sympathy and aid of Whistler, but their love and appreciation for the man and his work. The sympathy then existing between the President and most of the Council was genuine, and he appreciated it as much as they did. After dinner a few of the Council went with him to Sir John Lavery's, where he was staying, and there he read *The Baronet and the Butterfly*, which had just appeared in Paris. This, because of absence or ill-health, was the only Council dinner he went to, though for a time there was one every year, and at several Rodin presided.

To the second exhibition the President sent several small canvases recently finished. Again the infallible critics discussed them as promising works of the past, and were made to eat their words, and again in the catalogue Whistler quoted the *Times*, and to its opinion of to-day of " . . . the vanished hand which drew the *Symphony in White* and *Miss Alexander*" compared its opinion " of the moment " of those two pictures, when the *Miss Alexander* suggested a sketch left " before the colours were dry in a room where the chimney-sweeps were at work," and was " uncompromisingly vulgar." " Other Times, other lines ! " was Whistler's comment. Three illustrated catalogues were published by Messrs. W. H. Ward and Company. Whistler's *Chelsea Rags* and *Trouville* were both included in the ordinary editions, and the *Little Lady Sophie of Soho* and *Lillie in our Alley* were added to the *édition de luxe*. The catalogues until 1910, when even Whistler's *format* was discarded, are the most interesting issued by any society. The second exhibition was less of a success financially than the first, and the Society of Artists came near being involved in the crash which overtook the financing company. To avoid complications Whistler insisted that the Society should have an Honorary Solicitor and Treasurer, and Mr. William Webb was appointed.

In the first and second exhibitions the art of the world was represented as it never had been before in England,* as it never has been since. In both, attempts to attract the public with music and receptions and entertainments were made, but Whistler objected to music, saying that the two arts should be kept separate, that people who came

* Sir Henry Cole, in the early sixties, had five international shows at South Kensington.

to hear the music could not see the pictures, and people who came to see the pictures would not want to hear the music. There were misunderstandings with the proprietor and the promoters, the former wishing to see some of his friends represented, and the latter to see some of their money back, and the outlook was gloomy. Whistler wrote a memorable letter in which he said that he, as commander, proposed to repel pirates and sink their craft, and they never openly got aboard, though a few stowaways did creep in.

No show was held in 1900, the Paris Universal Exhibition taking up the members' energy, and not until the autumn of 1901 was the third exhibition opened at the Galleries of the Royal Institute in Piccadilly. There had been official and other changes. Professor Sauter had been made Honorary Secretary, *pro tem.*, and the Society, which up till now had consisted of the Council only, admitted Associates, and with their election the international character began to wane, for, out of thirty-two Associates elected, twenty-eight were resident in Great Britain. This exhibition was the first to be financially successful. The President sent seven small paintings and pastels. *Phryne the Superb* was reproduced in the catalogue, as well as *Gold and Orange—The Neighbours*, and *Green and Silver—The Great Sea.*

Professor Sauter devoted himself to furthering the International idea of the President, and under his Secretaryship the Society held exhibitions of its English members' work in Budapest, Munich, and afterwards in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and St. Louis. On June 11, 1903, Professor Sauter was relieved temporarily of the Secretaryship and J. took his place. Within a few weeks it was his sad duty to call a meeting to announce to the Society the loss they had sustained by the death of their President.

The Council determined to follow the traditions of Whistler and to honour his memory. Not only were the American exhibitions held, but the Society organised a show of British art in Dusseldorf, and made arrangements for a Memorial Exhibition of the President's works in London. In the autumn of 1903 M. Rodin accepted the Presidency, and the fourth exhibition, the first held in the New Gallery, was opened in January 1904, in which the late President was represented by the *Symphony in White, No. III.*, lent by Mr. Edmund Davis: *Rose and Gold—The Tulip*, lent by Miss Birnie

A FRESHENING BREEZE

OIL

LILLIE IN OUR ALLEY
BROWN AND GOLD
OIL
In the possession of J. J. Cowan, Esq.

(*See page* 361)

Philip; *Valparaiso*, lent by Mr. Graham Robertson; *Symphony in Grey—Battersea*, lent by Mrs. Armitage; and *Study for a Fan*, lent by Mr. C. H. Shannon.

In 1905 the most important and successful show in the career of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers was given; the Memorial Exhibition of the works of James McNeill Whistler. For complete success it lacked only the co-operation of Whistler's executrix, which the Council originally understood was promised, but which was ultimately withheld. Still, it was the most complete exhibition of his works ever given, superior from every point of view to the small show at the Scottish Academy the previous year, in many respects to the Boston show of the same year, and to the Paris Memorial Exhibition, 1905, which was disappointing. As can be seen from the elaborate catalogue, more especially the beautifully illustrated *édition de luxe* published by Mr. Heinemann, the exhibition at the New Gallery contained nearly all the principal oil-paintings, the largest collection of etchings ever shown together, all but one or two of the lithographs, and many of the pastels, water-colours, and drawings.

CHAPTER XLIV: THE ACADÉMIE CARMEN. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-EIGHT TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND ONE.

In the autumn of 1898 a circular issued in Paris created a sensation in the studios. Whistler was going to open a school, the *Académie Whistler*. The announcement was made by his model, Madame Carmen Rossi. Whistler at once wrote from Whitehall Court, where he was staying (October 1, 1898), to the papers "to correct an erroneous statement, or rather to modify an exaggeration, that an otherwise *bona fide* prospectus is circulating in Paris. An *atelier* is to be opened in the Passage Stanislas, and, in company with my friend, the distinguished sculptor, Mr. MacMonnies, I have promised to attend its classes. The *patronne* has issued a document in which this new Arcadia is described as the *Académie Whistler* and further qualified as the Anglo-American School. I would like it to be understood that, having hitherto abstained from all plot of instruction, this is no sudden

assertion in the *Ville Lumière* of my own. Nor could I be in any way responsible for the proposed mysterious irruption in Paris of whatever Anglo-American portends. 'American,' I take it, is synonymous with modesty, and 'Anglo,' in art, I am unable to grasp at all, otherwise than as suggestive of complete innocence and the blank of Burlington House. I purpose only, then, to visit, as harmlessly as may be, in turn with Mr. MacMonnies, the new academy which has my best wishes, and, if no other good come of it, at least to rigorously carry out my promise of never appearing anywhere else."

Whistler had nothing to do with the financial management, everything with the system of teaching, and he said that he proposed to offer the students his knowledge of a lifetime. It may be, as we have heard, that he had been asked, with MacMonnies, to criticise the work of Ary Renan's or Luc-Olivier Merson's students, and that this gave him the idea of visiting a school under his own direction.

The Passage Stanislas is a small street running off the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs; No. 6, a house of two storeys and a courtyard or garden at the back which was afterwards covered with glass. Over the front door the sign *Académie Whistler* did appear, but only for a short time. The glazed courtyard became a studio, and there was another above to which a fine old staircase led. The house had been built, or adapted, as a studio, and, except that the walls were distempered, no change was made. The rooms were fitted up with school furniture; for this, we believe, Whistler advanced the money. Within a few days a vast number of pupils had put their names down, deserting the other *ateliers* of Paris. Some left the English schools, and still others came from Germany and America. Whistler was delighted, telling us that students were coming in squads, that the Passage was crowded, and that owners of carriages struggled with *rapins* and prize-winners to get in.

Miss Inez Bate (Mrs. Clifford Addams), who was among the earliest to put down her name, who remained in the school till the end and who became Whistler's apprentice, has not only told us the story of the *Académie Carmen*, but has given us her record of it and of Whistler's methods of teaching, written at his request and partially corrected by him. It is the record of his "knowledge of a lifetime," for he taught in the school the truths he had been years formulating, and is of the

greatest importance, as valuable a document as the treatise of Cennino Cennini. In the future Mrs. Addams' statement, revised by Whistler, will live.

He insisted on seriousness. The *Académie Carmen* was not to be like other schools; instead of singing, there was to be no talking; smoking was not allowed; the walls were not to be decorated with charcoal; studio cackle was forbidden; if people wanted these things, they could go back from whence they came. He was to be received as a master visiting his pupils, not as a good fellow in his shirt-sleeves. For the first weeks things did not go very well. Carmen was not used to her post, the students were not used to such a master, and Whistler was not used to them. A *massier* was appointed, and the men and women who had been working together were separated and two classes formed. Within a short time Mrs. Addams was chosen *massière*, a position she held until the school closed. She writes:

"The *Académie* began its somewhat disturbed career in the fall of 1898. A letter was received from Mr. Whistler announcing that he would shortly appear, and, on the day appointed, the *Académie Carmen* had the honour of receiving him for the first time. He proceeded to look at the various studies, most carefully noting under whose teaching and in what school each student's former studies had been pursued.

"Most kindly something was said to each, and to one student who offered apology for his drawing, Mr. Whistler said simply, 'It is unnecessary—I really come to learn—feeling you are all much cleverer than I.'

"Mr. Whistler, before he left, expressed to the *Patronne* his wish that there should be separate *ateliers* for the ladies and gentlemen and that the present habit of both working together should be immediately discontinued.

"His second visit was spent in consideration of the more advanced students. One, whose study suffered from the introduction of an unbeautiful object in the background, because it happened to be there, was told that, 'One's study, even the most unpretentious, is always one's picture, and must be, in form and arrangement, a perfect harmony from the beginning.' With this unheard-of advice, Mr. Whistler turned to the students, whose work he had been inspecting and

intimated that they might begin to paint, and so really learn to draw, telling them that the true understanding of drawing the figure comes by having learned to appreciate the subtle modellings by the use of the infinite gradation that paint makes possible.

"On his third visit he turned to one student and picked up her palette, pointing out that being the instrument on which the painter plays his harmony, it must be beautiful always, as the tenderly-cared-for violin of the great musician.

"He suggested that it would be a pleasure to show them his way of painting, and if this student could, without too much difficulty, clean her palette, he would endeavour to show them 'the easiest way of getting into difficulties.'

"And it was then that Mr. Whistler's palette was given. His whole system lies in the complete mastery of the palette—on the palette the work must be done before transferring one note on to the canvas.

"He recommended the small oval palettes as being easy to hold. White was placed at the top edge in the centre, in generous quantity, and to the left came in succession yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, raw umber, cobalt, and mineral blue; while to right, vermilion, Venetian red, Indian red, and black. Sometimes the burnt sienna would be placed between the Venetian and Indian red, but generally the former placing of colours was insisted upon.

"A mass of colour, giving the fairest tone of the flesh, would then be mixed and laid in the centre of the palette near the top, and a broad band of black curving downward from this mass of light flesh-note to the bottom, gave the greatest depth possible in any shadow, and so, between the prepared light and the black, the colour was spread, and mingled with any of the various pure colours necessary to obtain the desired changes of note, until there appeared on the palette a tone-picture of the figure that was to be painted, and at the same time a preparation for the background was made on the left in equally careful manner.

"Many brushes were used, each one containing a full quantity of every dominant note, so that when the palette presented as near a reproduction of the model and background as the worker could obtain, the colour could be put down with a generous flowing brush.

"Mr. Whistler said, 'I do not interfere with your individuality. I

place in your hands a sure means of expressing it, if you can learn to understand, and if you have your own sight still.' Each student prepared his or her palette, in some the mass of light would exceed the dark, in others the reverse would be the case. Mr. Whistler made no comments on these conditions of the students' palettes : ' I do not teach art ; I teach the scientific application of paint and brushes.' His one insistence was that no painting on the canvas should be begun until the student felt he could go no further on the palette ; the various and harmonious notes were to represent, as nearly as he could see, the model and background that he was to paint.

" Mr. Whistler would often refrain from looking at the students' canvas, but would carefully examine the palette, saying that there he could see the progress being made, and that it was really much more important for it to present a beautiful appearance, than for the canvas to be fine and the palette inharmonious. He said, ' If you cannot manage your palette, how are you going to manage your canvas ? '

" These statements sounded like heresy to the majority of the students, and they refused to believe the reason and purpose of such teaching, and as they had never before received even a hint to consider the palette of primary importance, they insisted in believing that this was but a peculiarity of Mr. Whistler's manner of working, and that, to adopt it, would be with fatal results !

" The careful attempts to follow the subtle modellings of flesh placed in a quiet, simple light, and therefore extremely grey and intricate in its change of form, brought about necessarily, in the commencement of each student's endeavour, a rather low-toned result. One student said to Mr. Whistler that she did not wish to paint in such low tones, but wanted to keep her colour pure and brilliant ; he answered, ' then keep it in the tubes, it is your only chance at first.'

" They were taught to look upon the model as a sculptor would, using the paint as a modeller does his clay ; to create on the canvas a statue, using the brush as a sculptor his chisel, following carefully each change of note, which means ' form ' ; it being preferable that the figure should be presented in a simple manner, without an attempt to obtain a thousand changes of colour that are there in reality, and make it, first of all, *really and truly exist in its proper atmosphere*, than that it should present a brightly coloured image, pleasing to the eye, but

without solidity and non-existent on any real plane. This, it will be seen, was the reason of Mr. Whistler's repeated and insistent commands to give the background the most complete attention, believing that by it alone the figure had a reason to exist.

" Mr. Whistler would often paint for the students.

" Once he modelled a figure, standing in the full, clear light of the *atelier*, against a dull, rose-coloured wall. After spending almost an hour upon the palette, he put down with swift, sure touches, the notes of which his brushes were already generously filled, so subtle that those standing close to the canvas saw apparently no difference in each successive note as it was put down, but those standing at the proper distance away noticed the general turn of the body appear, and the faint subtle modellings take their place, and finally, when the last delicate touch of light was laid on, the figure was seen to exist in its proper atmosphere and at its proper distance within the canvas, modelled, as Mr. Whistler said, ' in painter's clay,' and ready to be taken up the next day and carried yet further in delicacy, and the next day further still, and so on until the end.

" And he insisted that it was as important to train the eye as the hand, that long accustoming oneself to seeing crude notes in Nature, spots of red, blue, and yellow in flesh where they are not, had harmed the eye, and the training to readjust the real, quiet, subtle note of Nature required long and patient study. ' To find the true note is the difficulty ; it is comparatively easy to employ it when found.'

" He once said that had he been given at the commencement of his artistic career what he was then offering, his work would have been different. But he found in his youth no absolute definite facts, and he ' fell in a pit and floundered,' and from this he desired to save whom he could. ' All is so simple,' he would say, ' it is based on proved scientific facts ; follow this teaching and you *must* learn to paint ; not necessarily learn art, but, at least, absolutely learn to paint what you see.'

" He also demanded the student to abandon all former methods of teaching, unless in harmony with his own, and to approach the science as taught by himself in a simple and trustful manner.

" The students, used to having any little sketch praised, and finding such efforts remained unnoticed by Mr. Whistler, while an intelligent and careful, though to their eyes stupid, attempt to model in simple

form and colour would receive approbation, grew irritated, and the majority left for a more congenial atmosphere.

"It was pointed out that a child, in the simple innocence of infancy, painting the red coat of the toy soldier red indeed, is in reality nearer the great truth than the most accomplished trickster with his clever brushwork and brilliant manipulation of many colours.

"'Distrust everything you have done without understanding it. It is not sufficient to achieve a fine piece of painting. You must know *how* you did it, that the next time you can do it again, and never have to suffer from that disastrous state of the clever artist, whose friends say to him, what a charming piece of painting, do not touch it again, and, although he knows it is incomplete, yet he dare not but comply, *because he knows he might never get the same clever effect again.*

"'Remember which of the colours you most employed, how you managed the turning of the shadow into the light, and if you do not remember scrape out your work and do it all over again, for one *fact* is worth a thousand misty imaginings. You must be able to do every part equally well, for the greatness of a work of art lies in the perfect harmony of the whole, not in the fine painting of one or more details.'

"It was many months before a student produced a canvas which showed a grasp of the science he had so patiently been explaining. Mr. Whistler delighted in this, and had the canvas placed on an easel and in a frame that he might more clearly point out to the other students the reason of its merit; it showed primarily an understanding of the two great principles; first, it represented a figure *inside* the frame and surrounded by the atmosphere of the studio, and secondly, it was created of one piece of flesh, simply but firmly painted and free from mark of brush. As the weeks went on, and the progress in this student's work continued, Mr. Whistler finally handed over to her [Mrs. Addams] the surveillance of the new-comers and the task of explaining to them the first principles of his manner.

"The *Académie* had the distinction of causing the rumour that something was being taught there, something definite and absolute.

"A large number of students who had been in the *Académie* for a short time and left, returned, dissatisfied with other schools, that they might once more satisfy themselves that nothing was to be learned there after all.

"Mr. Whistler allowed this to continue for some time, but finally, the fatigue of such constant changes caused him to issue an order that the *Académie Carmen* should be tried but once.

"The students in the men's life-class were constantly changing. On Christmas Day, Mr. Whistler invited them to visit him in his *atelier* and showed them many of his own canvases in various stages of completeness; explaining how certain results had been obtained, and how certain notes had been blended, and assuring them that he used the science he was teaching them, only that each student would arrange it according to his own needs as time went on, begging them not to hesitate to ask him any question that they wished, or to point out anything they failed to understand. There was an increased enthusiasm for a few weeks, but gradually the old spirit of misunderstanding and mistrust returned, and the men's class again contained but few students.

"Another disappointment to them was that Mr. Whistler explained when they showed him pictures they had painted with a hope to exploit as pupils of the Master in the yearly *Salon*, that this was impossible, that their complete understanding of the Great Principles and the fitting execution of their application could not be a matter of a few months' study, and he told them he was like a chemist who put drugs into bottles, and he certainly should not send those bottles out in his name unless he was quite satisfied with, and sure of, the contents.

"The last week of the first year arrived, and Mr. Whistler spent the whole of each morning at the *Académie*. The supervision of one student's work was so satisfactory that he communicated with her, after the closing of the *Académie*, to announce that he desired to enter into an apprenticeship with her, for a term of five years, as he considered it would take fully that time to teach her the whole of his Science and make of her a finished craftsman; with her artistic development he never for a moment pretended to interfere—'that,' he said, 'is or is not superb—it was determined at birth, but I can teach you *how to paint*.'

"So, on the 20th of July (1899), the Deed of Apprenticeship [with Mrs. Addams] was signed and legally witnessed, and she 'bound herself to her Master to learn the Art and Craft of a painter, faithfully to serve after the manner of an Apprentice for the full term of five years, his

secrets keep and his lawful commands obey, she shall do no damage to his goods nor suffer it to be done by others, nor waste his goods, nor lend them unlawfully, nor do any act whereby he might sustain loss, nor sell to other painters nor exhibit during her apprenticeship nor absent herself from her said Master's service unlawfully, but in all things as a faithful Apprentice shall behave herself towards her said Master and others during the said term. . . . And the said Master, on his side, undertakes to teach and instruct her, or cause her to be taught and instructed. But if she commit any breach of these covenants he may immediately discharge her.'

"Into the hands of his Apprentice—also now the *massière*—Mr. Whistler gave the opening of the school the second year, sending all instructions to her from Pourville, where he was staying.

"Each new candidate for admission should submit an example of his or her work to the *massière*, and so prevent the introduction into the *Académie* of, first, those who were at present incompetent to place a figure in fair drawing upon the canvas; and secondly, those whose instruction in an adverse manner of painting had gone so far that their work would cause dissension and argument in the *Académie*. Unfortunately, this order was not well received by some, though the majority were willing to accede to any desire on the part of Mr. Whistler.

"A number absolutely refused to suffer any rule, and preferred to distrust what they could not understand, and the talk among the students of the *Quartier* was now in disparagement of the *Académie*.

"Compositions were never done in the school. It was so much more important to learn to paint and draw, for, as Mr. Whistler said, 'if ever you saw anything really perfectly beautiful, suppose you could not draw and paint!'—'The faculty for compositions is part of the artist, he has it, or he has it not—he cannot acquire it by study—he will only learn to adjust the composition of others, and, at the same time, he uses his faculty in every figure he draws, every line he makes, while in a large sense, composition may be dormant from childhood until maturity, and there it will be found in all its fresh vigour, waiting for the craftsman to use the mysterious quality in his adjustment of his perfect drawings to fit their spaces.'

"The third and last year (1900) of the *Académie Carmen* was marked at its commencement by the failure to open a men's life-class. Mr.

Whistler had suffered so greatly during the preceding years from their inability to comprehend his principles and also from the short time the students remained in the school, that at the latter part of the season he often refused to criticise in the men's class at all. He would call sometimes on Sunday mornings and take out and place upon easels the various studies that had been done by the men the previous week, and often he would declare that nothing interested him among them and that he should not criticise that week, that he could not face the fatigue of the ' blankness ' of the *atelier*.

" The *Académie* was opened in October 1900 by a woman's life-class which was well attended. The school had been moved to an old building in the Boulevard Montparnasse, but shortly after Mr. Whistler was taken very ill and he was forced to leave England on a long voyage. He wrote a letter to the students that never reached them, then, from Corsica, another, with his best wishes for the New Century, and his explanation of the doctor's abrupt orders. The *Académie* was kept open by the Apprentice until the end of March (1901), but the faith of the students seemed unable to bear further trials, and after great discontent at Mr. Whistler's continued absence and a gradual dwindling away of the students until there were but one or two left, the Apprentice wrote of this to Mr. Whistler."

Whistler wrote from Ajaccio a formal letter of dismissal to the few students left, kissing the tips of their rosy fingers, bidding them God-speed and stating the case that history might be made. The reading of the letter by the *massière* in the *atelier* closed the school, and an experiment to which Whistler brought enthusiasm, only to meet from the average student the distrust the average artist had shown him all his life. One of the last things he did before the close was to make an apprentice also of Mr. Clifford Addams, the one man who remained faithful. And in his case, too, a Deed of Apprenticeship was drawn up and signed.

The story of the *Académie* is carried on in the following letter from Mr. Frederick MacMonnies, concerning his connection with it :

". . . I had always heard so much about his being impossible, but the more I saw of him the more I realised that anyone who could quarrel with him must be written down an ass.

" An instance of his rare straightforwardness and frankness in

friendship occurred in the Carmen School. He used to come up to my studio just before breakfast, and we would go off to Lavenue's or the Café du Cardinal.

"One morning he said he had a great affair on hand. Carmen was going to open the school and he had agreed to teach, a thing he had always said was shocking, useless, and encouragement of incapables. He suggested I help him out with teaching the sculptor pupils and the drawing, so I gladly agreed.

"All the schools in Paris were deserted immediately, and the funny little studios of Carmen's place were packed with all kinds of boys and girls, mostly Americans, who had tried all styles of teaching.

"Mr. Whistler, having a full sense of a picturesque *grande entrée*, did not appear until the school was in full swing about a week after the opening, and until the pupils had passed the palpitating stage and were in a dazed state of expectancy and half collapsed into nervous prostration. The various samples of such awaiting him represented the methods of almost every teacher in Paris.

"He arrived, gloves and cane in hand, and enjoyed every minute of his stay, daintily and gaily touching very weighty matters. A few days after his arrival I went to the school and found the entire crew painting as black as a hat—delicate, rose-coloured pearly models translated into mulattoes, a most astonishing transformation. As time went on the blackness increased. Finally, one day, I suggested to one of the young women who was particularly dreary, to tone her study up. She informed me she saw it so. I took her palette and keyed the figure into something like the delicate and brilliant colouring, much to her disgust. When I had finished, she informed me, 'Mr. Whistler told me to paint it that way.' I told her she had misunderstood, that he had never meant her to paint untrue. Several criticisms among the men of the same sort of thing, and I left.

"Of course, all this was carried to Whistler, and a few days later after breakfast, over his coffee, he waved his cigarette towards me and said, 'Now, my dear MacMonnies, I like you—and I am going to talk to you the way your mother does (he used to play whist in Paris with my mother, and they made a most amusing combination). Now, you see, I have always believed there has been something radically wrong with all this teaching that has been going on in Paris all these years in Julian's

and the rest. I decided years ago the principle was false. They give the young things men's food when they require pap. My idea is to give them three or four colours—let them learn to model and paint the form and line first until they are strong enough to use others. If they become so, well and good; if not, let them sink out of sight.' I suggested the doubt that their eyes might in this way be trained to see wrong. No, he did not agree with that. Anyway, I apologised, and said I was a presuming and meddlesome ass, and if I had known he was running his school on a system, I would have remained silent. If you could have seen the charming manner, the frank kindness and friendly spirit with which he undertook to remonstrate, you would understand how much I admired his generous spirit.

"Few men under the circumstances (I being very much his junior) would not have made a great row and got upon their high horses, and we would have quit enemies.

"Later, I found that the sculptor pupils did not arrive in droves to be taught by me, and the drawing criticisms unnecessary, as the school had become a tonal modelling school and my criticisms superfluous. I proposed to Mr. Whistler that I was *de trop*, and that it could only be properly done by him. He agreed and I left.

"M. Rodin (or his friends) wished to take my place, but Mr. Whistler, I heard, said he could not under any circumstances have anyone replace MacMonnies, as it might occasion comment unfavourable to me. Now I consider that one of the rarest of friendly actions, as I knew he would not have objected to Rodin otherwise.

"A canny, croaking friend of mine, who hated Whistler and never lost an opportunity of misquoting and belittling him, dropped in at my house a few nights after my resignation from the school, quite full up with croaks of delight that we had fallen out, as he supposed, and that the row he had long predicted had finally come. I laughed it off, and after dinner a familiar knock, and who should be ushered in but Mr. Whistler, asking my mother to play another game of whist.

"A rather amusing thing occurred in my studio.

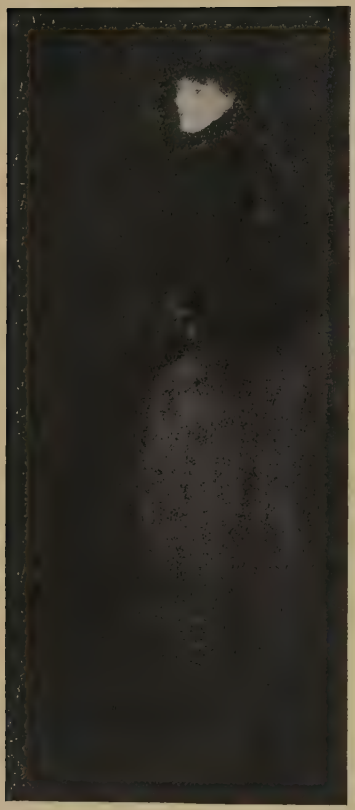
"A rich and spread-eagle young American got into a tussle of wits with Whistler—neither had met before (Whistler, however, knew and liked his brother)—on the advantage of foreign study and life abroad.

THE COAST OF BRITTANY
ALONE WITH THE TIDE
OIL
Formerly in the possession of Ross Winans, Esq.

(*See page 67*)

THE SEA, POURVILLE
OIL
In the possession of A. A. Hannay, Esq.

(*See page 366*)



THE FUR JACKET

ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND BROWN

OIL

(Picture in Progress)

From a photograph lent by
Pickford R. Waller, Esq.

(See page 432)

(Completed picture)

In the Worcester Museum,
Massachusetts

I cannot remember all the distinguished and amusing arguments or the delightful appreciation of the French people of Whistler, or of the rather boring and rather brutal jabbing of the young man. At any rate, Whistler defended himself admirably, always keeping his temper, which the young man wished him to lose in order to trip him up. I saw that Whistler was bored and tried to separate them, but it had gone too far. Finally, Whistler held out his hand and with his charming quizzical smile said, 'Good-bye, oh, ah, I am so glad to have met you—on account of your brother!'

"The year before Whistler died, in December, I went to America on a short trip. I hadn't been home for a number of years. Whistler had always said he would go back with me some time, so I telegraphed him at Bath to induce him to come with me. He replied by telegram, 'Merry Xmas, *bon voyage*, but I fear you will have to face your country without me.'"

To anyone familiar with art schools Whistler's idea appeared revolutionary, but he knew that he was carrying on the tradition of Gleyre. Art schools are now conducted on such different principles that a comparison may be useful. Usually the student is not taught to do anything. The master puts him at drawing, telling him, after the drawing is finished, where it is wrong. The student starts again and drops into worse blunders because he has not been told how to avoid the first. If he improves, it is by accident, or his own intelligence, more than by teaching. At length, when the pupil has learned enough drawing to avoid the mistakes of the beginner, and to make it difficult for the master to detect his faults, he is put at painting, and the problem becomes twice as difficult for the student. In drawing, each school has some fixed method of working, nowhere more fixed than at the Royal Academy, which leads to nothing—or Paris. In painting, the professor corrects mistakes in colour, in tone, in value, which is easier than to correct drawing, and the student becomes more confused than ever, for he is in colour less likely than in drawing to tumble unaided on the right thing. As to the use of colours, the mixing of colours, the arrangement of the palette, the handling of tools—these are never taught in modern schools. The result is that the new-comer imitates the older students—the favourites—and shuffles along somehow. Any attempt on the part of the master to impress his character on the

students would be resented by most of them, and any attempt at individuality on their part would be resented by the master, for the official art school, like the official technical school, is the resort of the incompetent. The Royal Academy goes so far as to change the visitors in its painting schools—that is, the teachers—every month, and the confusion to the student handed on from Mr. Sargent to Sir Hubert von Herkomer and then to Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema can hardly be imagined.

For this sort of art school Whistler had no toleration—its product is the amateur or Academician. When he was asked, " Then you would do away with all the art schools ? " Whistler answered, " Not at all, they are harmless, and it is just as well when the genius appears that he should find the fire alight and the room warm, an easel close at hand and the model sitting, but I have no doubt he'll alter the pose ! "

Whistler would have liked to practise the methods of the Old Masters. He would have taught the students from the beginning, from the grinding and mixing of the colours. He believed that students should work with him as apprentices worked with their masters in earlier times. Artists then taught the student to work as they did. How much individuality, save the master's, is shown in Rubens' canvases, mostly done by his pupils ? So long as Van Dyck remained with Rubens he worked in Rubens' manner, learning his trade. When he felt strong enough to say what he wanted to say in his own way as an accomplished craftsman, he left the school and set up for himself. Raphael was trained in Perugino's studio, helped his master, and, when he had learned all he could there, opened one of his own. And this is the way Whistler wished his students to work with him. The misfortune is that he made the experiment when it was too late to profit by the skill of the pupils whom he wished to train to be of use to him. He knew that it would take at least five years for students to learn to use the tools he put in their hands, and the fact that, at the end of three years, when the school closed, a few of his pupils could paint well enough for their painting to be mistaken for his shows how right he was. If, after five years, they could see for themselves the beauty that was around them, they would by that time have been taught how to paint it in their own way, for what he could do was to teach them to translate

their vision on to canvas. Mr. Starr says that Whistler "told me to paint things exactly as I saw them. 'Young men think they should paint like this or that painter. Be quite simple, no fussy foolishness, you know, and don't try to be what they call strong. When a picture smells of paint,' he said slowly, 'it's what they call strong.'"

Had his health been maintained, had he not been discouraged because students mostly came to him with the desire to do work which looked easy, great results would have been accomplished. His regret was that students did not begin with him. Mrs. Addams has told us of the great success of one, Miss Prince, who had never been in an art school. She had nothing to unlearn. She understood, and, at the end of a year, had made more progress than any. There were exceptions among the more advanced, men who to-day are well-known artists and who, looking back, admit how much they learned. Frederick Frieseke, Henry S. Hubbell, and C. Harry White passed through the school. One of the few Frenchmen was Simon Bussy, who describes Whistler as *très distingué*, *très fin*, *très autoritaire*, though not so stimulating a master as Gustave Moreau, under whom he had been studying. But the greater number of students, elementary or advanced, thought that Whistler was going to teach them, by some short cut, to arrive at distinction. When they found that, though the system was different, they had to go through the same drudgery as in any school, they were dissatisfied and left. Moreover, the strict discipline and the separation of the sexes were unpopular. Nor could they understand Whistler. Many of his sayings remembered by them explain their bewilderment.

One day, Whistler, going into the class, found three new pupils. To these he said:

"Where have you studied?"

"With Chase."

"Couldn't have done better!"

"And where have you studied?"

"With Bonnat."

"You couldn't have done better!"

"Where have you studied?"

"I have never studied anywhere, Mr. Whistler."

"I am sure you could not have done better!"

To the young lady who told him that she was painting what she

saw, he answered, "The shock will come when you see what you paint!"

To the man who was smoking, he said, "Really, you had better stop painting, for you might get interested in your work, and your pipe would go out!"

Of a superior amateur he inquired, "Have you been through college? I suppose you shoot? Fish, of course? Go in for football, no doubt? Yes? Well, then I can let you off for painting."

We asked Whistler how much truth there was in these stories. His answer was: "Well, you know, the one thing I cannot be responsible for in my daily life is the daily story about me."

But he admitted they were, in the main, true. He added one incident we have heard from no one else that explains a peculiarity to which we have referred. In Venice, he said, he got into the habit, as he worked on his plates, of blowing away the little powder raised by the needle ploughing through the varnish to the copper, and, unconsciously, he kept on blowing when painting or drawing. Once, after he had painted before the students and had left the studio, there was heard in the silence a sound of blowing. Then another student began blowing away as he worked, and so they went on. "Well," they said, "already we have *la manière*, and that is much." Whistler heard of it and broke himself of the habit. One day he saw on the wall in the men's studio, written in charcoal:

"*I bought a palette just like his,*
His colours and his brush.
The devil of it is, you see,
I did not buy his touch."

Whistler's methods and manner confused the average students who came, but his faith in his system was as great as the students' unbelief. He suggested that his criticisms of their work should be recorded on a gramophone. He thought of opening another class in London. The only time E. saw the *Académie*, towards the beginning of the second year, the whole place was full of life and go. In the end, the want of confidence in him, his illness, and his absence broke up the school. But he sowed seed which will bring forth a thousandfold. For, just as his theory of art is now recognised as he stated it in *The Ten O'Clock*,

so will his practice, proved by his work and teaching, be accepted in the future.

CHAPTER XLV: THE BEGINNING OF THE END. THE YEAR NINETEEN HUNDRED.

In the spring of 1900 an event of great importance in our relations with Whistler occurred. Towards the end of May he asked us to write his Life. Now that his fame was established, a great deal, indeed far too much, was written about him. Unauthorised publications appeared or were in preparation, and it was evident that more would follow. Whistler shrank from being written about by people not in sympathy with him or incapable of understanding him. He was, and is, to many critics and commentators a riddle or an affront. Mistakes were made, facts were distorted. Mr. Heinemann suggested, first that he should write his autobiography, then that his biography should be written with his authority by someone in whom he had confidence. Mr. Heinemann thought of Henley, but Whistler objected. Mr. Charles Whibley was proposed by Mr. Heinemann, but again Whistler objected. It was after this that either Mr. Heinemann or Whistler mentioned the name of Joseph Pennell.

We had been abroad for a few days, and returned to London on May 28 to find a letter from Mr. Heinemann telling J. of this "magnificent opportunity." No one could appreciate more fully the honour as well as the responsibility. J. saw Whistler at once, and said, "You are the modern Cellini and you should write it yourself."

Whistler had neither the time nor patience, but he promised to contribute what he could to J.'s book. We knew that while staying at Whitehall Court he had written two, or perhaps more, autobiographical chapters at Mr. Heinemann's suggestion. Miss Birnie Philip, after the first edition of our *Life* was published, though we had proved our authority in the English Law Courts, wrote to the *Times* (November 24, 1908) that Whistler "stated his objections to biographers in a fragment written in 1896 of what was intended to be the story of his life. The following passages will make his opinions clear:

"'Determined that no mendacious scamp shall tell the foolish truths about me when centuries have gone by, and anxiety no longer pulls at the pen of the "pupil" who would sell the soul of his master, I now proceed to take the wind out of such speculator by immediately furnishing myself the fiction of my own biography, which shall remain, and is the story of my life. . . .

"'Curiously, too, I find no grief in noting the closing of more than one middle-aged eye that I had before now caught turned warily upon me with a view to future foolscap improved from slight intimacy. . . .

"'How tiresome, indeed, are the Griswolds of this world, and how offensive. Pinning their unimportant names on the linen of the great as they return the intercepted wash, they go down to Posterity with their impudent bill, and Posterity accepts and remembers them as the unrequited benefactors of ungrateful genius!'"

This, according to Miss Birnie Philip, was written in 1896. Whistler added to the record, Mr. Heinemann says, while living with him at Whitehall Court. But Whistler soon found the task beyond him, and so, changing his mind on the subject, asked J. to write the story of his life and his work in 1900.

Almost immediately it was arranged that E. should collaborate and that we should do the book together. Whistler promised to help us in every way and, when in the mood, to tell us what he could about himself and his life, with the understanding that we were to take notes. He was not a man from whom dates and facts could be forced. His method was not unlike that of Dr. Johnson, who, when Boswell asked for biographical details, said, "They'll come out by degrees as we talk together." Whistler had to talk in his own fashion, or not at all; we were to listen, no matter where we met or under what conditions. It was also agreed that there were to be two volumes, one devoted to his life, the other to his work, and that photographs should be taken of the pictures in his studio to illustrate the volumes. Whistler's pictures were being carried off only too quickly, and whatever we needed for illustration, or as a record, would have to be photographed at once.

The duty of making the notes fell to E., and, from that time until his death, she kept an account of our meetings with him. He was true to his promise. We were often in the studio, and he spent evening after

evening with us. Sometimes we dined with him at Garlant's Hotel or at the Café Royal, sometimes we met at Mr. Heinemann's, but usually he dined with us in Buckingham Street, coming so frequently that he said to us one June evening:

"Well, you know, you will feel about me as I did in the old days about the man I could never ask to dinner because he was always there! I couldn't ask him to sit down, because there he always was, already in his chair!"

Once he told E. to write to J., who was out of town, that he was living on our staircase. During those evenings he gave us many facts and much material used in previous chapters. He began by telling us of the years at home, his student days in Paris, his coming to Chelsea, and, though dates were not his strong point, we soon had a consecutive story of that early period. Every evening made us wish more than ever that he could have written instead of talking, for we soon discovered the difficulty of rendering his talk. He used to reproach J. with "talking shorthand," but no one was a greater master of the art than himself. And so much of its meaning was in the pause, the gesture, the punctuating hands, the laugh, the adjusting of the eye-glass, the quick look from the keen blue eyes flashing under the bushy eyebrows. The impression left with us from the close intercourse of this summer was of his wonderful vitality, his inexhaustible youth. As yet illness had not sapped his energy. He was sixty-six, but only the greyness of the ever-abundant hair, the wrinkles, the loose throat suggested age. He held himself as erect, he took the world as gaily, his interests were as fresh as if he were beginning life. Some saw a sign of feebleness in the nap after dinner, but this was a habit of long standing, and after ten minutes, or less, he was awake, revived for the talk that went on until midnight and later.

Whistler wished us to have the photographing in the studio begun without delay. Our first meeting, after the preliminaries were settled, was on June 2, 1900; on the 6th the photographer and his assistant were in Fitzroy Street with J. to superintend. It took long to select the things which should be done first, Mr. Gray, the photographer, picking out those which he thought would come best, Whistler preferring others that Gray feared might not come at all, though the idea was that, in the end, everything in the studio should be photographed. Whistler

found himself shoved in a corner, barricaded behind two or three big cameras, and he could scarcely stir. He grew impatient, he insisted that he must work. As the light was not good for the photographer, some canvases were moved out in the hall, some were put on the roof, but the best place was discovered to be Mr. Wimbush's studio in the same building. Whistler went with J. through the little cabinets where pastels and prints were kept, and decided that a certain number must be worked on, but that the others could be photographed. Then they lunched together with Miss Birnie Philip, Gray photographing all the while, and then Whistler's patience was exhausted and everybody was turned out until the next day, when Gray came again. And the next day, and many next days, J. would go to Fitzroy Street and Whistler would say, "Now you must wait," and he would wait in the little ante-room with Marie, and Whistler would talk away through the open door until J. was brought into the studio to see the finishing-touches added to the day's work. This explains the beginning of our difficulties and the reason why our progress was not rapid.

We have spoken of the fever of work that had taken hold of Whistler. He dreaded to lose a second. He was rarely willing to leave the studio during the day or, if he did, it was to work somewhere else, as when he went to Sir Frank Short's and, as he told us the same evening, pulled nineteen prints before lunch, and all the joy in it came back, but he did not return in the afternoon, because, "well, you know, my consideration for others quite equals my own energy." For himself he had no consideration, and his work seldom stopped. We remember one late afternoon during the summer, when he had asked us to come to the studio, finding tea on the table and Whistler at his easel. "We must have tea at once or it will get cold," he said, and went on painting. Ten minutes later he said again, "We must have tea," and again went on painting. And the tea waited for a half-hour before he could lay down his brushes, and then it was to place the canvas in a frame and look at it for another ten minutes. When an invited interruption was to him a hindrance, he could not but find Mr. Gray, with his huge apparatus, a nuisance. A good many photographs, however, were made at Fitzroy Street, and Whistler helped to get permission for pictures to be photographed wherever the photographing did not interfere with his work. In England, America, and on the Continent many pictures which had

not been reproduced, and to which access could be obtained, were photographed.

Nothing interested Whistler more this year than the Universal Exhibition in Paris, and he and Mr. John M. Cauldwell, the American Commissioner, understood each other after a first encounter. Mr. Cauldwell, coming to Paris to arrange the exhibition, with little time at his disposal and a great deal to do, wrote to ask Whistler to call on a certain day "at 4.30 sharp." Whistler's answer was that, though appreciating the honour of the invitation, he regretted his inability to meet Mr. Cauldwell, as he never had been able and never should be able to be anywhere "at 4.30 sharp," and it looked as if the unfortunate experience of 1889 might be repeated. But when Whistler met Mr. Cauldwell, when he found how much deference was shown him, when he saw the decoration and arrangement of the American galleries, he was more than willing to be represented in the American section. He sent *L'Andalouse*, the portrait of Mrs. Whibley, *Brown and Gold*, the full-length of himself, and, at the Committee's request, *The Little White Girl*, never before seen in Paris. He brought together also a fine group of etchings, and when he learned that he was awarded a *Grand Prix* for painting and another for engraving, he was gratified and did not hesitate to show it. The years of waiting for the official compliment did not lessen his pleasure when it came. Rossetti retired from the battle at an early stage, but Whistler fought to the end and gloried in his victory. He was dining at Mr. Heinemann's when he received the news, and they drank his health and crowned him with flowers, and he enjoyed it as fully as the *fêtes* of his early Paris days. J. was awarded a gold medal for engraving, and we suggested that the occasion was one for general celebration, which was complete when Timothy Cole, another gold medallist, appeared unexpectedly as we were sitting down to dinner. Mr. Kennedy was one of the party, and Miss Birnie Philip came with Whistler, and the little dinner was the ceremony he knew how to make of reunions of the kind. He was pleased when he heard that his medals were voted unanimously and read out the first with applause. A story in connection with the awards, told over our table some months later by John Lambert returning from Paris, amused him vastly. Though it was agreed that the first medals should not be announced until all the others were awarded, the news leaked out and got into the papers.

At the next meeting of the jury, Carolus-Duran, always gorgeous, was more resplendent than ever in a flowered waistcoat. He took the chair, and at once, with his eye on the American jurors, said that there had been indiscretion. Alexander Harrison was up like a shot: "*A propos des indiscrétions, messieurs, regardez le gilet de Carolus!*"

During this time Whistler was paying not only for his rooms at the Hotel Chatham in Paris, but for one at Garlant's Hotel, in addition to the apartment in the Rue du Bac where Miss Birnie Philip and her mother lived the greater part of the year, for the studios in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs and Fitzroy Street, and lastly, for the "Company of the Butterfly" in Hinde Street. It was no light burden, though he had a light way of referring to his "collection of *châteaux* and *pieds-à-terre*." His pockets were as full as he had wanted them, but he could not get used to their not being empty. Once, afraid he could not meet one of his many bills for rent, he asked a friend to verify his bank account, with the result that six thousand pounds were found to be lying idle.

Whistler, as a "West Point man," followed the Boer War with the same interest he had shown in the Spanish War. It was a "beautiful war" on the part of the Boers, for whom he had unbounded admiration. From Paris, through the winter, he sent us, week by week, Caran d'Ache's cartoons in the *Figaro*. In London he cut from the papers despatches and leaders that reported the bravery of the Boers and the blunders of the British, and carried them with him wherever he went. His comments did not amuse the "Islanders," whom, however, he knew how to soothe after exasperating them almost beyond endurance. One evening J. walked back with him to Garlant's, and they were having their whisky-and-soda in the landlady's room while Whistler gave his version of the news of the day, which he thought particularly psychological. Then suddenly, when it seemed as if the landlady could not stand it an instant longer, he turned and said in his most charming manner, "Well, you know, you would have made a very good Boer yourself, madam." As he said it, it became the most amiable of compliments, and the evening was finished over a dish of choice peaches which she hoped would please him. Another evening, the Boers were on the point of kindling a fatal war between himself and a good friend, when a

bang of his fist on the table brought down a picture from the wall of our dining-room, and in the crash of glass the Boers were forgotten. No one who met him during the years of the war can dissociate him from this talk, and not to refer to it would be to give a poor idea of him. If he had a sympathetic audience, he went over and over the incidents of the struggle; the wonder of the despatches; Lord Roberts' explanation that all would have gone well with the Suffolks on a certain occasion if they had not had a panic; Mrs. Kruger receiving the British Army while the Boers retired, supplied with all they wanted, though they went on capturing the British soldiers wholesale; General Buller's announcement that he had made the enemy respect his rear. When he was told of despatches stating that Buller, on one occasion, had retired without losing a man, or a flag, or a cannon, he added, "Yes, or a minute." He repeated the answer of a man at a lecture, who, when the lecturer declared that the cream of the British Army had gone to South Africa, called out, "Whipped cream." The blunderings and the surrenderings gave Whistler malicious joy, and he declared that as soon as the British soldier found he was no longer in a majority of ten to one, he threw up the sponge or dropped the gun. He recalled Bismarck's saying that South Africa would prove the grave of the British Empire, and also that the day would come when the blundering of the British Army would surprise the world, and he quoted "a sort of professional prophet" who predicted a July that would bring destruction to the British: "What has July 1900 in store for the Island?" he would ask.

There was no question of his interest in the Boers, but neither could there be that this interest was coloured by prejudice. He never forgot his "years of battle" in England, when, alone, he met the blunderings, mistakes, and misunderstandings of the army of artists, critics, and the public. In his old age, as in his youth, he loved London for its beauty. His friends were there, nowhere else was life so congenial, and not even Paris could keep him long from London. But it was his boast that he was an American citizen, that on his father's side he was Irish, a Highlander on his mother's, and that there was not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood in his veins. He had no affection for the people who persisted in their abuse and ridicule until, confronted by the Goupil Exhibition of 1892, they were compelled—however grudgingly—

to give him his due. This was one reason why he expressed the wish that none of his pictures should form part of an English national collection, or remain in England, and emphasised the fact that his sitters at the end were American or Scotch. He conquered, but the conquest did not make him accept the old enemies as new friends. In the position of the Boers he no doubt fancied a parallel with his own when, alone, they defied the English, who, on the battlefield as in the appreciation of art, blundered and misunderstood. Whistler's ingenuity in seeing only what he wanted to see and in making that conform to his theories was extraordinary. He could not be beaten because, for him, right on the other side did not exist. He came nearest to it one evening when discussing the war, not with an Englishman, but with an American and an officer into the bargain, whom he met in our rooms, and who said that there was always blundering at the opening of a campaign, as at Santiago, where two divisions of the United States Army were drawn up so that, if they had fired, they must have shot each other down. It was a shock, but Whistler rallied, offered no comment, and was careful afterwards to avoid such dangerous ground.

Prejudice coloured all his talk of the English, whose characteristics to him were as humorous as his were incomprehensible to them. It was astonishing to hear him seize upon a weak point, play with it, elaborate it fantastically, and then make it tell. The "enemies" suffered from his wit as he from their density. His artistic sense served him in satire as in everything else. One favourite subject was the much-vaunted English cleanliness. He evolved an elaborate theory:

"Paris is full of baths and always has been; you can see them, beautiful Louis XV. and Louis XVI. baths on the Seine; in London, until a few years ago, there were none except in Argyll Street, to which Britons came with a furtive air, afraid of being caught. And the French, having the habit of the bath, think and say nothing of it, while the British—well, they're so astonished now they have learned to bathe, they can't talk of anything but their tub."

The Bath Club he described as "the latest incarnation of the British discovery of water." His ingenious answer was ready when British virtue was extolled. He repeated to us a conversation at this time with Madame Sarah Grand. She said it was delightful to be back

in England after five or six weeks in France, where she had not seen any men, except two, and they were Germans, whom she could have embraced in welcome. A Frenchman never would forget that women are women. She liked to meet men as comrades, without thought of sex. Whistler told her: "You are to be congratulated, madam—certainly, the Englishwoman succeeds, as no other could, in obliging men to forget her sex."

A few days after, he reported another "happy" answer. He was with three Englishmen and a German. One of the Englishmen said, "The trouble is, we English are too honest; we have always been stupidly honest." Whistler turned to the German: "You see, it is now historically acknowledged that whenever there has been honesty in this country, there has been stupidity."

His ingenuity increased with the consternation it caused, and the "Islander" figured more and more in his talk.

The excitement in China this summer interested him little less than affairs in South Africa. He was indignant, not with the Chinese for the alleged massacres at Pekin, but with Americans and Europeans for considering the massacres an outrage that called for redress. After all, the Chinese had their way of doing things, and it was better to lose whole armies of Europeans than to harm the smallest of beautiful things in that great wonderful country. He said to us one day:

"Here are these people thousands of years older in civilisation than us, with a religion thousands of years older than ours, and our missionaries go out there and tell them who God is. It is simply preposterous, you know, that for what Europe and America consider a question of honour one blue pot should be risked."

Another evening when he said this to a larger audience, one of the party asked him if art did not always mark the decadence of a country. "Well, you know," said Whistler, "a good many countries manage to go to the dogs without it."

The month of July in London was unusually hot, and for the first time we heard Whistler complain of the heat, in which, as a rule, he revelled, though he dressed for it at dinner in white duck trousers and waistcoat with his dinner-jacket, and in the street exchanged his silk hat for a wide-brimmed soft grey felt, or a "dandy" straw. He was restless, anxious to stay in his studio, but, for the sake of Miss Birnie

Philip and her mother, anxious to go to the country or by the sea. Looking from our windows, he would say that, with the river there and the Embankment Gardens gay with music and people, we were in no need to leave town, and we were sure he envied us. One day he went to Amersham, near London, with the idea of staying there and painting two landscapes somebody wanted. Mr. Wimbush took him.

"You know, really, I can't say that, towards twilight, it is not pretty in a curious way, but not really pretty after all—it's all country, and the country is detestable."

Eventually he took a house at Sutton, near Dublin, persuaded Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip to go there, and then promptly left with Mr. Elwell for Holland. He told Mr. Sidney Starr once that only one landscape interested him, the landscape of London. But he made an exception of Holland. When he was reminded that there is no country there, he said to us :

"That's just why I like it—no great, full-blown, shapeless trees as in England, but everything neat and trim, and the trunks of the trees painted white, and the cows wear quilts, and it is all arranged and charming. And look at the skies ! They talk about the blue skies of Italy ; the skies of Italy are not blue, they are black. You do not see blue skies except in Holland and here, where you get great white clouds, and then the spaces between are blue ! And in Holland there is atmosphere, and that means mystery. There is mystery here, too, and the people don't want it. What they like is when the east wind blows, when you can look across the river and count the wires in the canary bird's cage on the other side."

He stayed a week at Domburg, a small sea-shore village near Middelburg. With its little red roofs nestling among the sand-dunes and its wide beach under the skies he loved, he thought it enchanting, and made a few water-colours which he showed us afterwards in the studio. The place, he said, was not yet exploited, and at Madame Elout's he found good wine and a Dordrecht banker who talked of the Boers and assured him they were all right, the Dutch would see to that. A visit to Ireland followed. He went full of expectations, for as the descendant of the Irish Whistlers he called himself an Irishman. We have a note of his stay there from the late Sir William Armstrong, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland :

"He took a house, 'Craigie' the name of it, at Sutton, six miles from Dublin, on the spit of sand which connects the Hill of Howth with the mainland (as the Neutral Ground unites 'Gib.' with Spain) on the north side of Dublin Bay. There he excited the curiosity of the natives by at once papering up the windows on the north side of the house, for half their height, with brown paper. He came to dinner with me one night, stipulating that he should be allowed to depart at 9.30, as he was such an early goer to bed. We dined accordingly at 7, and his Jehu, with the only closed fly the northern half of County Dublin could supply, was punctually at the door at the hour named. There he had to wait for three hours, for it was not until 12.30 that the delightful flow of Whistler's eloquence came to an end, and that he extracted himself from the deep arm-chair which had been his pulpit for four hours and a half. His talk had been great, and we had confined ourselves to little exclamatory appreciations and gazes of wrapt adoration! I spent an hour or two with him in the Irish National Gallery. I found him there lying on the handrail before a sketch of Hogarth (George II. and his family) and declaring it was the most beautiful picture in the world. The only other remark on any particular picture which I can now recall is his saying of my own portrait by Walter Osborne, 'It has a *skin*, it has a *skin!*' He soon grew tired of Sutton and Ireland, and when I called at Craigie a few days after the dinner he had flown. He did not forget to send a graceful word to my wife, signed with his name and Butterfly."

He did little work during his visit. The house was on the wrong side of the bay, the weather was wretched, but Chester, on the way home, was "charming and full of possibilities."

In September the frequent meetings were continued. The talk drifting here and there, touched upon many subjects belonging to no particular period, but characteristic of his moods and memories. Thus, one evening, when Mr. W. B. Blaikie was with us and the talk turned to Scotland, Whistler told stories of Carlyle. Allingham, he said, was for a time by way of being Carlyle's Boswell and was always at his heels. They were walking in the Embankment Gardens at Chelsea, when Carlyle stopped suddenly: "Have a care, mon, have a care, for ye have a tur-r-ruble faculty for developing into a bore!" Carlyle had been reading about Michael Angelo with some idea of writing his life or an

essay, but it was Michael Angelo, the engineer, who interested him. Another day, walking with Allingham, they passed South Kensington Museum. "You had better go in," Allingham said. "Why, mon, only fools go in there." Allingham explained that he would find sculpture by Michael Angelo, and he should know something of the artist's work before writing his life. "No," said Carlyle, "we need only glance at that."

Whistler's talk of Howell and Tudor House overflowed with anecdotes of the adventurer, for whom he retained a tender regret, and the group gathered about Rossetti. He accounted for Howell's downfall by a last stroke of inventiveness when he procured rare, priceless black pots for a patron who later discovered rows of the same pots in an Oxford Street shop. Whistler had a special liking for the story of Rossetti dining at Lindsey Row, at the height of the blue and white craze, and becoming so excited when his fish was served on a plate he had never seen before that he forgot the fish and turned it over, fish and all, to look at the mark on the back. Another memory was of a dinner at Mr. Ionides', with Rossetti a pagan, Sir Richard Burton a Mohammedan, Lady Burton a Catholic. They fell into a hot argument over religion, but Whistler said nothing. Lady Burton, who was in a state of exaltation, could not stand his silence: "And what are you, Mr. Whistler?" "I, madam," he answered, "why, I am an amateur!" He spent many evenings drawing upon his memory of the "droll" and "joyous" things of the past. But the past brought him back with redoubled interest to the present, in which so much waited to be done.

In October we began to notice a change, and we knew that when he worried there was cause. He was called to Paris once or twice about the school and his "*châteaux* and *pieds-à-terre*." After one of these journeys he was laid up with a severe cold at Mr. Heinemann's. In November he was in bed for many days at Garlant's. He had other worries. British critics conspired either to ignore his success at the Paris Exhibition, or account for it sneeringly or lyingly. He was irritated when he read an article on the Exhibition, signed D. S. M., in the *Saturday Review* devoted altogether, he told us, to Manet and Fantin, with only a passing reference to himself:

"Manet did very good work, of course, but then Manet was always *l'écolier*—the student with a certain sense of things in paint, and that

PORTRAIT OF MRS. WALTER SICKERT

In the possession of Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson

PORTRAIT OF MISS WOAKES

In the possession of Messrs. Knoedler & Co.

(*See page* 360)

is all !—he never understood that art is a positive science, one step in it leading to another. He painted, you know, in *la manière noire*, the dark pictures that look very well when you come to them at Durand-Ruel's, after wandering through rooms of screaming blues and violets and greens, but he was so little in earnest that midway in his career he took to the blues and violets and greens himself. You know, it is the trouble with so many; they paint in one way—brilliant colour, say —they see something, like Ribot, and, dear me, they think, we had better try to do this too, and they do and, well, really, you know, in the end they do nothing for themselves !"

He was furious with the critic who stated that his medal was awarded for *The Little White Girl*. The statement was offensive because, he said, " the critics are always passing over recent work for early masterpieces, though all are masterpieces ; there is no better, no worse ; the work has always gone on, it has grown, not changed, and the pictures I am painting now are full of qualities they cannot understand to-day any better than they understood *The Little White Girl* at the time it was painted."

This was an argument he often used. A few evenings after, he told a man, who suggested that Millet's later work was not so good because he was married and had to make both ends meet, " You're wrong. An artist's work is never better, never worse ; it must be always good, in the end as in the beginning, if he is an artist, if it is in him to do anything at all. He would not be influenced by the chance of a wife or anything of that kind. He is always the artist."

He was annoyed because critics could not see a truth which to him was simple and obvious. His annoyance culminated when the *Magazine of Art* not only said the *Grand Prix* was awarded for *The Little White Girl*, but protested against the award, because the picture was painted before the ten years' limit imposed by the French authorities, a protest printed in other papers. Whistler could not bear this in silence, for it looked like an effort to deprive him of his first high award from a Paris Exhibition. The attack was disgraceful. Whistler's two other pictures were his most recent, and, as we have said, *The Little White Girl* was specially invited. As soon as he was well enough, he came to us several times, with Mr. William Webb, his solicitor, to talk the affair over. As a result, an apology was demanded, and made. This

belittling of certain pictures in favour of others, with its inevitable inference, offended him, in the end as in the beginning. Mr. Sargent writes us an instance of his manner of carrying off the offence before the world. Somebody brought him a commission for a painting, stipulating that it should be "a serious work." Whistler's answer was that he "could not break with the traditions of a lifetime."

Another worry he should have been spared was a dispute with one of the tenants at the Rue du Bac, a trivial matter which, in his nervous state, loomed large and made him unnecessarily miserable. The carpets of the lady on the floor above him were shaken out of her windows into his garden, and it could not be stopped. He tried the law, but was told he must have disinterested witnesses outside the family. If he engaged a detective, a month might pass before she would do it again. But it chanced that, while beating a carpet, it fell into his garden, and his servants refused to give it up. The lady went to law and his lawyer advised him to return the carpet. It depressed him hopelessly, and as he had long ceased to live in the Rue du Bac, we could not understand why he should have heard of so petty a domestic squabble.

Ill and worried as he was, our work at intervals came to a standstill. When he felt better and stronger the talks went on, but at moments he seemed almost to fear that the book would prove an obituary. Once he said to us that we "wanted to make an Old Master of me before my time," and we had too much respect and affection for him to add to his worries by our importunity. With the late autumn his weakness developed into serious illness. By the middle of November he was extremely anxious about himself, for his cough would not go. The doctor's diagnosis, he said, was "lowered in tone: probably the result of living in the midst of English pictures." A sea journey was advised, and Tangier suggested for the winter. When he was with us he could not conceal his anxiety. If he sneezed, he hurried away. He fell asleep before dinner was over; sometimes he could hardly keep awake through the evening. Once or twice he seemed to be more than asleep, when there was nothing to do but to rouse him, which was not easy, and we were extremely frightened until we could, and, indeed, until J. got him back to Garlant's. He would never trust himself to the night air until Augustine had mixed him a hot "grog." Tangier did not appeal to him, and he asked J. to go with him to Gibraltar,

stay a while at Malaga, and then come back by Madrid to see at last the pictures he had always wanted to see. He was hurt when J.'s work made it impossible for him to leave London.

In December Whistler gave up the struggle to brave the London winter, and decided to sail for Gibraltar, on the way to Tangier and Algiers, with Mr. Birnie Philip, his brother-in-law, to take care of him. Sir Thomas Sutherland, Chairman of the P. & O. Company, arranged for every comfort on the voyage. But, as usual, there were complications at the last moment—as usual, the fearful trouble of getting off from his studio. Everybody was pressed into his service and kept busy, all the waiters in the hotel were in attendance. The day before he was to start he discovered that his etching plates needed to be re-grounded and he sent them to J., who agreed to do what he could at such short notice, but warned him that there was not time to ground the plates properly and that very likely they would be spoiled. Whistler sent for them in the evening and, instead of leaving them out to dry until the morning, wrapped them up and packed them among the linen in his trunk. It was extraordinary that a man so careful about his work should always have wanted somebody else to ground his plates or prepare his canvases, or do something as important, that he should have done for himself, and that oftener than not he should have wanted it, as on this occasion, at the last moment. However, with the help of his friends and the waiters and his family, he was got ready in time, and on December 14 he started for the South.

CHAPTER XLVI: IN SEARCH OF HEALTH. THE YEARS NINETEEN HUNDRED AND ONE AND NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWO.

As soon as Whistler got away from London he was unhappy. At Tangier the wind was icy, at Algiers it rained, and everywhere when it was clear the sky was "hard" and the sea was "black." Snow was falling at Marseilles, and he was kept in his room for a couple of weeks, so ill he had to send for a doctor, and he was only comforted when he found the doctor delightful. Corsica was recommended and, as "Napoleon's Island," attracted Whistler. When he was well

enough Mr. Birnie Philip left him, and he sailed alone for Ajaccio. Here he stayed at the Hôtel Schweizerhof. The weather at first was abominable, so cold and the wind so treacherous that he could not work out of doors, and he felt his loneliness acutely. Fortunately he made a friend of the Curator of the Museum, and Mr. Heinemann joined him for a time. They loitered about together in the quaint little town, went to see the house where Napoleon was born—" a great experience "—spent many rainy hours in the *café* where Mr. Heinemann taught him to play dominoes, a resource not only then but the rest of his life. They played for the price of their coffee, and Whistler cheated with a brilliancy that made him easily a winner, but that horrified a German who sometimes took a hand, though the *naiveté* of Whistler's " system " could not have deceived a child.

He was by no means idle, and he brought back a series of exquisite pen and pencil drawings begun at Tangier. A few water-colours were made, and when the weather gave him a chance he worked on his copper-plates. He bit one or two that J. had grounded in London, and the ground came off. He did not know how, or did not have the courage to prevent it. We can only wonder again that a man who made such wonderful plates did not know what to do, or did not dare do it, in difficulties of this sort, preferring to rely upon somebody else. He had drawn on some of the other plates before he began to bite any of them, and he may have done more than have as yet been seen. In Mr. Howard Mansfield's and the Grolier catalogues only one plate in Corsica is recorded, in both called *The Bohemians*. But as J. grounded ten or a dozen for Whistler, and as he spoke to us of more than one bitten, it is probable that the plates exist. " All my dainty work lost," he wrote to us from Corsica, and it looked as if the shadow had fallen upon our friendship. But he understood, and the shadow passed as quickly as it came. There were other schemes. One day, after his return, he told Mr. Clifford Addams that he had seen a great black-bearded shepherd, on a horse, carrying a long pole, coming down a hill-side, of whom he wanted to make a large equestrian portrait. But he never started it. He felt he was not able.

The closing of the school in Paris occupied and worried him, and he was arranging for a show of pastels and prints at the Luxembourg. One pleasure, of which he wrote to us, came from " new honours " in

Dresden, where he was awarded a gold medal and elected "unanimously to the *Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts*." He was more tired than he admitted in his letters, dwelling little on his fatigue, and insisting that the doctor in Marseilles found nothing was the matter with him. But he was never strong after the autumn of 1900, and earlier than this the doctor in London warned his friends that he was failing.

He was more hopeful because at Ajaccio he said he had discovered what was the matter with him :

"At first, though I got through little, I never went out without a sketch-book or an etching-plate. I was always meaning to work, always thinking I must. Then the Curator offered me the use of his studio. The first day I was there he watched me, but said nothing until the afternoon. Then—' But, Mr. Whistler, I have looked at you, I have been watching. You are all nerves, you do nothing. You try to, but you cannot settle down to it. What you need is rest—to do nothing—not to try to do anything.' And all of a sudden, you know, it struck me that I had never rested, that I never had done nothing, that it was the one thing I needed. And I put myself down to doing nothing—amazing, you know. No more sketch-books, no more plates. I just sat in the sun and slept. I was cured. You know, Joseph must sit in the sun and sleep. Write and tell him so."

He was sufficiently recovered to take his old joy in the "Islanders," into the midst of whom he fell on the P. & O. steamer coming back from Marseilles :

"Nobody but English on board, and, after months of not seeing them, really they were amazing : there they all were at dinner, you know—the women in low gowns, the men in dinner jackets. They might look a trifle green, they might suddenly run when the ship rolled—but what matter ? There they were—men in dinner jackets, stewards behind their chairs in dinner jackets—and so all's right with the country ! And, do you know, it made the whole business clear to me down there in South Africa. At home every Englishman does his duty—appears in his dinner jacket at the dinner hour—and so, what difference what the Boers are doing ? All is well with England ! You know, you might just as well dress to ride in an omnibus ! "

Whistler returned from Corsica at the beginning of May in excellent spirits. He came to us on the day of his arrival. We give one small

Diploma Gallery I saw the Spanish Phillip's copy of *Las Meniñas*, full of atmosphere really, and dim understanding."

Ochtervelt's *Lady Standing at a Spinet* interested him, suggesting a favourite theme :

" The Dutchmen knew how to paint—they had respect for the surface of a picture ; the modern painter has no respect for anything but his own cleverness, and he is sometimes so clever that his work is like that of a bad boy, and I'm not sure that he ought not to be taken out and whipped for it. Cleverness !—well, cleverness has nothing to do with art ; there can be the same sort of cleverness in painting as that of the popular officer who cuts an orange into fancy shapes after dinner."

He was severe on contemporary artists who forgot the standard of the Louvre, the only standard he recognised. Of Conder he said, " *Il est trop joli pour être beau !* " and of a follower of Rodin, " He makes a landscape out of a man." When he saw Watts' *Hope* his comment was, " The hope that maketh the heart sick." Watts he always called " *ce faux Titien.*" " Except in England, would anything short of perfection in art be praised ? " he said. " Why approve the tolerable picture any more than the tolerable egg ? " A sitter dissatisfied with his portrait told Whistler it was not good. " Do you call it a good piece of art ? " he asked. " Well," said Whistler, " do you call yourself a good piece of Nature ? "

One day a man rushed into a hat store and, as Whistler was hatless, being fitted, bellowed, " I say, this hat don't fit." " Your coat don't, either," Whistler answered.

One or two evenings he risked the night air to come to us and his talk was as gay and brilliant—reminiscent, critical, " wicked," as the mood took him, and at times serious. We remember his earnestness when he recalled the *séances* and spiritual manifestations at Rossetti's, in which he believed. He could not understand the people who pretended to doubt the existence of another world and the hereafter. His faith was strong, though vague when there was question of analysing it. Probably he never tried to reduce it to dogma and doctrine, and, in that sense, he was " the amateur " he described himself in jest. If his inclination turned to any special creed it was to Catholicism. " The beauty of ritual is with the Catholics," he said. But his work left him

no time to study these problems, and his belief perhaps was stimulated by the mystery in which it was lost. He would have been more amused and interested than anybody could he have foreseen the messages to be received from him by an artist, and the book to be written by him for an author, and the portrait to be made by him for a medium, after his death.

On other days London apparently was tiring him and he dozed off and on through his visits. He expended much energy in sending some old pieces of silver to the doctor at Marseilles and the Curator at Ajaccio, who had been kind to him. He was full of these little courtesies and never forgot kindness, just as he never failed to show it to those who appealed to him, whether it was to find a publisher for an unsuccessful illustrator, or a gallery for an unsuccessful painter, or even, as we know happened once, to support a morphomaniac for months.

A shorter visit to town was made solely to attend a meeting of the International Society because his presence was particularly desired. This was one of the occasions that proved the sincerity and activity of his devotion to the Society and its affairs. It is a satisfaction that this devotion was appreciated and that the loyalty of the Council was not shaken during his lifetime.

In March Whistler came back to Tite Street, but, as we have said, he asked no one while he stayed with "the Ladies," his name for his mother- and sisters-in-law. There was one almost clandestine meeting with Professor Sauter, Whistler's desire to hear about the Boers, to whom he "never referred, of course, in the presence of the Ladies," becoming too strong to be endured, and he could rely upon Sauter for sympathy and the latest news. It was an interval of mystery in the studio. No one was invited, few were admitted, nothing was heard of the work being done. Whistler liked to keep up an effect of mystery in his movements, but we have never known him to carry it so far as during the first month or so after his return from Bath. At last J. was summoned. Whistler would not let him come further than the ante-room, talking to him through the open door or the thin partition, but presently, probably forgetting, called him into the studio and went on painting, and he forgot the mystery. Whistler felt he had little strength and devoted that little to his work. But, even in ill-health, he could not live without people about him, and he soon fell back into

his old ways. Miss Birnie Philip was now almost always in the studio with him. In April he showed us the portrait of Mr. Richard A. Canfield, whose acquaintance he made at this time, unfortunately, for he introduced Mr. Canfield to "the Ladies," and the introduction resulted in the loss of one of his friends. Miss Birnie Philip was sitting to him, he was working on the portrait of Miss Kinsella, the *Venus*, and the little heads, and he was adding to the series of pastels. He was bothered about the show of his prints and pastels which M. Bénédite wished to make at the Luxembourg, and he was anxious to hand over the details to J., who could not see to them as he was away constantly this year. Whistler looked forward to the show because of the official character it would have, though after recent purchases of pictures for the Luxembourg he said, "You know, really, I told Bénédite, if this goes on I am afraid I must take my 'Mummy' from his Hotel." He was worried also about a show at the Caxton Club in Chicago, where it was proposed to reproduce his etchings without his permission. But when the Club found he objected the matter dropped.

To avoid further wandering, for which he was no longer equal, he took a house in Chelsea, where he had lived almost thirty years: he had been absent hardly more than ten. Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip went to live with him. The house, not many doors west of old Chelsea Church, was No. 74 Cheyne Walk, built by Mr. C. R. Ashbee, and it stood on the site of a fish-shop of which Whistler had made a lithograph. There was a spacious studio at the back in which, in his words, he returned to his "old scheme of grey." Its drawbacks were that it was on a lower level than the street, reached by a descent of two or three steps from the entrance hall, and that the rest of the house was sacrificed to it. Two flights of stairs led up to the drawing-room where, in glass cases running round the room, he placed his blue-and-white. The dining-room was on this floor, but another flight of stairs had to be climbed to get to the bedrooms in the garrets. Almost all the windows opening upon the river were placed so high, and filled with such small panes, that little could be seen from them of the beauty of the Thames and its banks so dear to Whistler. The street door was of beaten copper and the house was full of decorative touches, which, he said, "make me wonder what I am doing here anyhow—the whole, you know, a successful example of the disastrous effect

of art upon the British middle classes." Into this house he moved in April.

He reserved his energy for his work and went out scarcely at all. He did not dare risk the dinner given in May by London artists to Rodin, who, however, breakfasted with him a day or two after. We mention a detail that shows how sensitive Whistler was on certain subjects. M. Lantéri and Mr. Tweed came with Rodin, and this is Whistler's account to us later on the same day

" It was all very charming. Rodin distinguished in every way—the breakfast very elegant—but—well, you know, you will understand. Before they came, naturally, I put my work out of sight, canvases up against the wall with their backs turned. And you know, never once, not even after breakfast, did Rodin ask to see anything, not that I wanted to show anything to Rodin, I needn't tell you—but in a man so distinguished it seemed a want of—well, of what West Point would have demanded under the circumstances."

No doubt Rodin thought, from the careful manner in which work was put out of sight, that he was not expected to refer to it. His opinion of Whistler we know, for he wrote it to us :

" *Whistler était un peintre dont le dessin avait beaucoup de profondeurs, et celles-ci furent préparées par de bonnes études, car il a dû étudier assidument.*

" *Il sentait la forme, non seulement comme le font les bons peintres mais de la manière des bons sculpteurs. Il avait un sentiment extrêmement fin, qui a fait croire à quelques-uns que sa base n'était pas forte, mais elle était, au contraire, et forte et sûre.*

" *Il comprenait admirablement l'atmosphère, et un de ses tableaux qui m'a le plus vivement impressionné, ' La Tamise (barrage) à Chelsea,' est merveilleux au point de vue de la profondeur de l'espace. Le paysage en somme n'a rien ; il n'y a que cette grande étendue d'atmosphère, rendue avec un art consommé.*

" *L'œuvre de Whistler ne perdra jamais par le temps ; elle gagnera ; car une de ses forces est l'énergie, une autre la délicatesse ; mais la principale est l'étude du dessin.*" *

His visits to us were on Sundays, when he came for noonday breakfast, alone or with Miss Birnie Philip. If possible, we had people he

* See Appendix at end of volume.

liked or was interested in to meet him. One Sunday the late Mrs. Sarah Whitman, of Boston, and Miss Tuckerman were of the party, and Whistler, though he arrived tired and listless, recovered his animation before breakfast was over, and, for the new audience, described again the house in which he was so astonished to find himself, and again summed up the Boer campaign. Once he braved the night and dined, June 12—the last time he dined at our table—and was so wonderful we forgot how ill he was. We asked Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Morris and Professor Sauter, and Mr. Morris brought a message from General Wheeler, then in London and delighted to have news of Whistler, whom he remembered so well in the class above him at West Point. To be remembered by a distinguished West Point man was charming, but Whistler would not hear of General Wheeler being in the class below him; it was the class above; for Whistler did not choose to be older than anybody. We have spoken of his prejudices. He gave that evening an instance of one of the strongest. Something was said of the negro; he refused to see "any good in the nigger, he did not like the nigger," and that was the end of it. But Mr. Morris argued that it depended on the nigger; some he would be glad to invite to his house and to dinner. "Well, you know," said Whistler, "I should say that depends not on the nigger, but on the season of the year!" This reminds us of his argument another evening with Mrs. T. Fisher Unwin. But the negro had never had a chance, Mrs. Unwin protested. "Never had a chance!" said Whistler, "why, there, you know, there they all were starting out equal—the white man, the yellow man, the brown man, the red man, the black man—what better chance could the black man have? If he got left, well, it's because he couldn't keep up in the race."

On these last visits there was another subject he could not keep long out of his thoughts and his talk. He had not been many days in his new house before building was begun by Mr. Ashbee on a vacant lot next door. "It is knock, knock, knock all day," Whistler said, and his resentment was unbounded. In his nervous state the perpetual irritation, the feeling that advantage had been taken of him and that he had not been informed of the nuisance beforehand, put him into a rage. Mr. Ashbee has written us that Whistler knew a building was to be put up. Those who took the house may have known, but Whistler

THE CHELSEA GIRL

(See page 359)

PORTRAIT OF E. G. KENNEDY

In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

(*See page* 335)

told us he did not until the work began. Excitement, above all, the doctor said, must be avoided as it was bad for his heart. There was no mistaking the effect of this endless annoyance. He hoped for legal redress, and he referred the matter to Mr. Webb. But the knocking continued. On June 17 E. dined with him at Cheyne Walk, the one other guest Mr. Freer, recently arrived from Detroit, and it seemed to her as if Whistler was fast losing the good done by the winter's rest and quiet. Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip were uneasy, and it came as no surprise to hear a few days later that he had left the house in search of repose and distraction in Holland, with Mr. Freer as his companion. It was too late. At The Hague, where he stayed in the Hôtel des Indes, he was dangerously ill, at death's door. Mr. Freer remained as long as he could, and Miss Birnie Philip and Mrs. Whibley hurried to take care of him. The period was critical. There was no suggestion of it in the first public sign he gave of convalescence. A stupid reporter telegraphed from The Hague that the trouble with Whistler " was old age, and it would take him a long time to get over it." The *Morning Post* published an article that Whistler thought had been prepared in anticipation of death, which, sparing him for the time, spared also the old wit. He wrote to beg that the " ready wreath and quick biography might be put back into their pigeon-hole for later use " ; in reference to the writer's description of him he apologised for " continuing to wear my own hair and eyebrows after distinguished *confrères* and eminent persons have long ceased the habit " ; and those who read the letter could not imagine that, a few days previously, his letter-writing seemed at an end. It contained his last word about Swinburne, and in it the bitterness with which he wrote *Et tu, Brute !* in *The Gentle Art* had disappeared. The *Morning Post* stated that Swinburne's verses inspired *The Little White Girl.* Whistler explained that the lines " were only written in my studio after the picture was painted. And the writing of them was a rare and graceful tribute from the poet to the painter—a noble recognition of work by the production of a nobler one."

After Mr. Freer had gone, Mr. Heinemann, at Whistler's urgent appeal, joined him in The Hague, a fortunate circumstance, as two charming spinster cousins, the Misses Norman, were able to find for the patient comforts out of reach of a stranger. They took rooms for him near the Hôtel des Indes, suggested a nurse, prepared dishes for him, and interested The Hague artists in his presence. Mesdag,

Israels, and Van 's Gravesande were attentive. Afterwards, Van 's Gravesande wrote :

" *Je l'ai beaucoup aimé. Whistler, malgré tout son quarrelling avec tout le monde, c'était un 'très bon garçon' tout à fait charmant entre camarades. J'ai passé quelques jours avec lui, il y déjà une vingtaine d'années, à Dordrecht nous y avons fait des croquis, des promenades sur l'eau, etc. etc. J'en garde toujours un excellent souvenir. On ne peut pas s'imaginer un compagnon plus gentil que lui, enjoué, aimable, sans aucune prétention, enthousiaste, et avec cela travailleur comme pas un.*"

Whistler enjoyed the society of his doctor—" the Court Doctor, quite the most distinguished in Holland." Mr. Clifford Addams came for a while from Dieppe, and in September E. went to Holland. Whistler was so much better that he made the short journey from The Hague to Amsterdam, where she was staying, to ask her to go with him to the Rijks Museum and look at the *Effie Deans*, which he had not seen in the gallery, and the Rembrandts. It is not easy for her to forgive the chance that took her away from the hotel before the telegram announcing his visit was delivered. She heard of him afterwards at Müller's book-shop, where he had been in search of old paper, for which they said his demand in Amsterdam had been so great and constant that dealers placed a fabulous price upon it. E. the next day went to The Hague, where she found him in rooms that in the last hours of packing looked bare and comfortless, for he had decided to start at once for London. He had promised to lunch with his doctor, so that she saw only enough of him to realise how frail and depressed and irritable illness had left him. His sisters-in-law told her that the doctor said he could keep well only by the greatest care and constant watchfulness, that he must not be excited, that he must not walk up many stairs.

Professor Sauter was more fortunate than E., and we have his notes of Whistler at The Hague when, with the first cheerful days of his recovery, his interest in life seemed to revive :

" Realising the difficulty of conveying my vivid impressions, I have hesitated for so long to give you an account of our experiences with Whistler during the last days of August and the beginning of September 1902, in Holland, soon after the severe illness which he suffered.

" A letter which I received in the beginning of August was sufficient proof that he was convalescent, and that he had regained his interest in many affairs, and that he was enjoying The Hague and the Hôtel des

Indes, but also that he was longing for the society of friends from London. Towards the end of August our journey to Belgium and Holland brought us to The Hague, and of course our first visit was to him.

"It was indeed a pleasure to hear his gay voice, after he had received our card, calling down from the top of the stairs, 'Are you there? Just wait a bit—I will be down in a moment.' In a few minutes his thin, delicately dressed figure appeared, in his face delight, gay as a schoolboy released from school and determined to have an outing.

"He had then removed to apartments a few doors from the hotel, but to the latter he invited us to lunch. With intense appreciation Whistler spoke of the attention and consideration shown to him by the hotel people during his illness. All was sun, like the beautiful sunny warm August day, and as if to give proof of his statements about the cooking, management, and everything in the hotel, he ordered lunch with great care.

"He was full of gaiety, and his amusement over the obituary and his own reply to it was convincing enough that neither his spirit nor his memory had suffered.

"After lunch, Whistler insisted on taking us for a drive to show us the 'charming surroundings' of The Hague and the Bosch. We drove also to Scheveningen. He was full of admiration and love for The Hague.

"On the way to Scheveningen the real state of his health became alarmingly evident. He looked very ill and fell asleep in the carriage, but to my suggestion to drive home and have a rest he would not listen.

"It was a glorious afternoon, and the calm sea with the little white breakers, the sand with hundreds of figures moving on it, and children playing in gay dresses, made a wonderful picture to enjoy in his company.

"About 5 P.M. we brought him to his rooms after arranging to visit the Mauritshuis together next day.

"About 11.30 next morning we met in the gallery, and wandered from room to room. He was all alive and bright again, and there he showed particular interest in and affection for Rembrandt's *Father*, and spoke of it as a fine example of the mental development of the artist, which, he said, should be continuous from work to work up to the end.

"I mentioned that we were going to the Vieux Doelen to lunch to

meet General De Wet; his interest in this announcement was intense, and I had to promise to tell him all about it in the afternoon.

"On coming to the two portraits by Franz Hals he examined the work with undisguised delight, but the full disclosure of feeling towards the Master of Haarlem was reserved to us for the next day.

"On my saying, 'We are going to Haarlem to-morrow,' Whistler promptly replied, 'Oh, I might come along with you.'

"In his delicate state of health this reply was startling indeed, and realising the responsibility of allowing him to undertake even the small journey away from his rooms and doctor, I replied, "But we are leaving by an early train.' 'Oh, then I might follow later on,' he finished.

"Thus we parted, he to his rooms, we to the Vieux Doelen.

"About 4 P.M. I went round to give him an account of my meeting with De Wet, which aroused the greatest curiosity, and many questions I had to face.

"When I asked him whether he had seen the Generals, he said, 'You see, I just drove round and left my cards on their Excellencies.'

"But still the journey of Haarlem occupied his mind, and before I left him it came out: 'Well, you are going to Haarlem early to-morrow? Perhaps I will see you there.'

"I certainly would never have dreamt for a moment that he would carry out what I took for passing fancy, and intense was my astonishment when next day about noon at the Haarlem Gallery I saw Whistler in the doorway, smilingly looking towards me, saying, 'Ah, I just wanted to see what you are doing.'

"From this moment until we took the train at the Haarlem Station back to The Hague a nature revealed itself in its force and subtlety, its worship for the real and its humility before the great, combining the experience of age with the enthusiasm of youth.

"Hardly could I get Whistler away for a small lunch.

"We wandered along the line from the early *St. George's Shooting Guild* of 1616 down to the old women of 1664.

"Certainly no collection would give stronger support to Whistler's theory that a master grows in his art, from picture to picture, till the end, than that at Haarlem.

"We went through the life with Hals the people portrayed on the canvases, his relations with, and attitude towards, his sitters; he entered in his mind into the studio to examine the canvas before the

picture was started and the sitters arrived, how Hals placed the men in the canvas in the positions appropriate to their ranks, how he divined the character, from the responsible colonel down to the youthful dandy lieutenant, and how he revelled in the colours of their garments !

" As time went on Whistler's enthusiasm increased, and even the distance between the railing and the picture was too great for this intimate discourse. All of a sudden, he crept under the railing close up to the picture, but lo ! this pleasure could not last for long.

" The attendant arrived and gave him in unmistakable words to understand that this was not the place from which to view the pictures.

" And Whistler crawled obediently back from his position, but not discouraged, saying, ' Wait—we will stay after they are gone,' pointing to the other visitors.

" Matters were soon arranged with the courteous little chief attendant down in the hall, who, pointing to the signature in the visitors' book, asked, ' *Is dat de groote Schilder?* ' (Is that the great painter ?) and on my confirming it, pressed his hands together, bent a little on one side, opened his eyes and mouth wide, and exclaimed under his breath, ' Ach ! ' He was a rare little man.

" We were soon free from fellow visitors and watchful attendants, and no more restrictions were in the way for Whistler's outburst of enthusiasm.

" We were indeed alone with Franz Hals.

" Now nothing could keep him away from the canvases ; particularly the groups of old men and women got their full share of appreciation.

" He went under the railing again, turning round towards me, saying, ' Now, *do* get me a chair.' And after it was pushed under the railing, he went on, ' *And now, do* help me on the top of it.' From that moment there was no holding him back. He went absolutely into raptures over the old women, admiring everything ; his exclamation of joy came out now at the top of his voice, now in the most tender, almost caressing whisper : ' Look at it—just look ; look at the beautiful colour—the flesh—look at the white—that black—look how those ribbons are put in. Oh, what a swell he was—can you see it all ?—and the character—how he realised it.' Moving with his hand so near the picture as if he wanted to caress it in every detail, he screamed with joy : ' Oh, I must touch it—just for the fun of it,' and he moved tenderly with his fingers over the face of one of the old women.

"There was the real Whistler—the man, the artist, the painter—there was no 'Why drag in Velasquez?' spirit—but the spirit of a youth, full of ardour, full of plans, on the threshold of his work, oblivious of the achievements of a lifetime.

"He went on to analyse the picture in its detail.

"'You see, *she* is a grand person'—pointing to the centre figure—'she wears a fine collar, and look at her two little black bows—she is the treasurer—she is the secretary—she keeps the records'—pointing at each in turn with his finger.

"With a fierce look in his eye, as though he would repulse an attack on Hals, and in contemptuous tone, he burst out, 'They say he was a drunkard, a coarse fellow; don't you believe it—they are the coarse fellows. Just imagine a drunkard doing these beautiful things!'

"'Just look how tenderly this mouth is put in—you must see the portrait of himself and his wife at the Rijks Museum. He was a swagger fellow. He was a cavalier—see the fine clothes he wears. That is a fine portrait, and his lady—she is charming, she is lovely.' In time, however, the excitement proved too much for him in his weak state, and it was high time to take him away into the fresh air. He appeared exhausted, and I feared a collapse after such emotions.

"During my absence in looking for a carriage he went on talking to Mrs. Sauter. 'This is what I would like to do, of course, you know, in my own way'—meaning the continual progress of his work to the last. 'Oh, I would have done anything for my art.' It was a great relief to have him safely seated in the carriage with us.

"Once there he soon regained his spirits, and, as we had expected to meet Mrs. Pennell at the Gallery, but looked in vain for her, we now drove from hotel to hotel in search of her, and on this expedition a truly Whistlerian incident happened. Stopping before one of the hotels, he requested to see the proprietor, who appeared immediately at the side of the carriage, a tall, solemn-looking gentleman, with a long reddish beard, bowing courteously, but the gentleman could give no information about Mrs. Pennell's arrival at his hotel. After minute inquiries about the place, Whistler turned to him, asking, '*Monsieur*, what hotel would you recommend in Haarlem if you would recommend any?' to which he promptly and seriously replied, '*Monsieur*, if I would recommend an hotel in Haarlem I would recommend my own.' 'Thank you, *Monsieur*, thank you,' responded Whistler, touching his hat, bowing slightly.

And we drove on, soon to arrive at the hotel where we intended to take tea, and rest.

"Soon we were happily settled on our return journey, in a special compartment, which he was, in his chivalrous consideration towards ladies, most anxious to reserve, as he put it, 'to make Mrs. Sauter comfortable—she is tired.'

"With it, a day full of emotions, amusement, and anxieties came to an end—and, as it proved to Whistler, the last pilgrimage to Franz Hals.

"It needed no persuasion to keep Whistler at home after so fatiguing a day.

"But on our return to the hotel late the next afternoon we were told that he had called three times, and finally left a note asking us to come round in the morning and also to bring him news of Mrs. Pennell.

"Monday was a fête day for Holland—the Queen's birthday, and the town gay with flags and orange streamers and happy holiday crowds.

"I went round early to keep him company and bring him the news he wished for.

"We sat at his window overlooking merry-go-rounds, little toy and sweet stalls, and throngs of little children in their loyal smart frocks.

"'What a pretty sight! If I only had my water-colours here I could do a nice little picture,' he remarked.

"Dr. Bisschop had kindly arranged to take us and Mr. Bruckmann to the Gallery of Mesdag, and Whistler accepted an invitation to join us.

"There the Canalettos were of chief interest to him. Lunch at a *café*, another visit to the Mauritshuis, and tea at his rooms brought our stay to an end."

CHAPTER XLVII: THE END. THE YEARS NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWO AND NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE.

Whistler came back to No. 74 Cheyne Walk, to the noise of building, to the bedroom at the top of the house—to the conditions against which the doctor's warning was emphatic. When E. saw him about the middle of September on her return—J. was still away—he had been again ill and was confined to his room. On her next visit,

within a few days, he was in bed, but he had moved downstairs to a small room adjoining the studio, intended, no doubt, for a model's dressing-room. In one way it was an improvement, for there were no stairs and his studio was close at hand whenever he had strength for work, but the only window looked upon the street, and the clatter of children and traffic was added to the builders' knocking.

Except in this house, we never saw him after his return from The Hague. At times, in the winter and spring, he was able to go out in a carriage, but the three flights of stairs to our flat rose between him and us, an insurmountable barrier. Therefore there were seldom the old long intimate talks, for he was not often alone in the studio. Miss Birnie Philip was usually with him, sometimes sitting apart with her knitting, and only rarely drawn into the conversation. Mrs. Whibley was frequently there, and before "the Ladies" there were reservations, for with many things they were not to be "troubled." This involved a restraint in himself and a sensation of oppression in his visitors. Then there was a coming and going of models, visits from his doctors, his solicitor, his barber, and many other people who helped to distract him. His friends were devoted, encouraged by him and knowing he welcomed anyone from the world without; Mr. Luke Ionides, oldest of all, Mrs. Whistler, Mr. Walton, who lived next door, Professor Sauter, Sir John Lavery, Mr. and Mrs. Addams, his apprentices, Arthur Studd, his near neighbour, drifted in and out almost daily. He was bored when alone and unable to work, though he had of recent years developed an extraordinary passion for reading. But, as a matter of fact, he was hardly ever lonely, for he was surrounded as he liked in his studio, and yet he felt his condition and grew restless, so that his wish to rejoin Mr. Heinemann in "housekeeping" seemed natural.

Whistler had intervals when his energy returned, and he worked and hoped. We knew on seeing him when he was not so well, for his costume of invalid remained original. He clung to a fur-lined overcoat worn into shabbiness. In his younger years he had objected to a dressing-gown as an unmanly concession; apparently he had not outgrown the objection, and on his bad days this shabby worn-out overcoat was its substitute. Nor did the studio seem the most comfortable place for a man so ill as he was. It was bare, with little furniture, as his studios always were, and he had not used it enough to give it the air of a workshop. The whole house showed that illness was reigning

there. The hall had a more unfinished, more unsettled look than the entrance at the Rue du Bac, and it was sometimes strewn with the trays and odds and ends of the sickroom. Papers and books lay on the floor of the drawing-room, in contrast to the blue-and-white in the cases. A litter of things at times covered the sideboard in the dining-room. Everywhere you felt the cheerlessness of a house which is not lived in. When we saw Whistler in his big, shabby overcoat shuffling about the huge studio, he struck us as so old, so feeble and fragile that we could imagine no sadder or more tragic figure. It was the more tragic because he had always been such a dandy, a word he would have been the first to use in reference to himself. We recall his horror once when he heard a story that represented him as untidy and slovenly. "I!" he said, "I, when if I had only an old rag to cover me I would wear it with such neatness and propriety and the utmost distinction!" But no one would have suspected the dandy in this forlorn little old man, wrapped in a worn overcoat, hardly able to walk. On his bad days there was not much walking about, and he lay stretched on an easy chair, talking little, barely listening, and dozing. His nights were often sleepless—he had lost the habit of sleep, he told us, and as the day went on he became so drowsy that it seemed as if nothing could rouse him from what was more like death than sleep. Sometimes, sitting by the table where tea was served, he would drop his forehead on the edge of the table, fall asleep, and remain motionless for an hour and more. A pretty little cat, brown and gold and white, that lived in the studio, was often curled up on his lap, sleeping too. His devotion to her was something to remember, and we have seen him get up, when probably he would not have stirred for any human being, just to empty the stale milk from her saucer and fill it up with fresh. A message was sent to E., one day, to announce the birth of her first kittens, that also made the studio their home and became a source of mild distraction to the invalid.

On his good days he liked to play dominoes after tea and he cheated with his accustomed tricks. He often kept J. for a game and sometimes for dinner with himself and Miss Birnie Philip in the studio, the climb to the dining-room out of the question. There were times when he would say he never could get back to work again, but others when he managed to work with not only the old vigour, but the old mastery. He had an Irish model, Miss Dorothy Seton, whose red hair was remarkably

beautiful and whose face Whistler thought as remarkable, for it reminded him of Hogarth's *Shrimp Girl.* One afternoon J. found him painting her, her red hair hanging over her shoulders and an apple in her hand, the picture to which the title *Daughter of Eve* was eventually given. He was walking up and down the studio in delight, looking almost strong, and he seized J. by the arm in the old fashion and walked him up and down too. "Well, Joseph, how long do you think it took me to paint that, now?" and not for weeks had he shown such animation as when he added, "It was done in a couple of hours this very morning." So far as we know, it was the last important picture he painted, and it was, as J. then saw it, the finest thing of his latest period. He must have painted on it again, for at the Paris Memorial Exhibition the bloom of its beauty had faded. Now and then he worked on a portrait of Miss Birnie Philip, and he was anxious to continue the portrait, started a year or so before, of Mrs. Heinemann, which needed only a few more sittings, but, to the world's loss, these could not be arranged. He saw to cleaning the *Rosa Corder*, which Mr. Canfield, who was back in London and buying pictures, drawings, and prints in the studio, bought this winter for two thousand pounds from Mr. Graham Robertson. The story of this purchase was the only amusing thing we ever heard Mr. Canfield say: "Offered the young fellow a thousand pounds—wouldn't hear of it. Offered him two—jumped at it. Why, the darned fool, if he had held on he could have had five!" Whistler telegraphed for us to come and look at *Rosa Corder* for the last time in England, "to m ke your *adieux* to her before her departure for America." When E.—J. again away—arrived at the studio, he was better than since his return from The Hague. He had slept eight hours and a half the night before, and he rejoiced in not being sleepy. He wiped the canvas here and there tenderly with a silk handkerchief and kept turning round to ask triumphantly, "Isn't she beautiful?"

Mr. Canfield was sitting again for his portrait, and was always welcome, not merely as a sitter, but as a friend. He seemed to have hypnotised Whistler, whom we heard say that Canfield was the only man who had never made a mistake in the studio. We could not help regretting this because of Canfield's notorious reputation in New York, and the unpleasant things said of Whistler's tolerance of the man. Whistler had been warned, but had sacrificed a friendship of years in

his indignation at " a breath of scandal " against anyone whom he had introduced to " the Ladies." In the early part of 1903 we received numerous letters and telegrams from correspondents of American papers in London re-echoing the question in the New York dailies, " Is Whistler painting gambler Canfield ? " The fact that Canfield was much desired at home made the New York papers of the yellowest sort, like the British respectable ones, eager for details, and all sorts and conditions of male and female reporters haunted our stairs. They were a terrible nuisance, and we remember in particular the youth who came with the usual question, " Is Whistler painting the gambler ? " and who, on J.'s reply that he had better go and ask the painter, said " But they tell me Whistler would either horsewhip me or kick me out of the house. What do you think ? " J.'s answer was that he had better go and see. Whistler's condition rendered any remark which might excite him dangerous, and everybody hesitated to suggest that Canfield was a very public character to include in one's private circle. Canfield's visits did not cease, and the fact that reconciled us to his presence was that it resulted in one of Whistler's masterpieces. The portrait, *His Reverence*, ranked then with *The Master Smith of Lyme Regis*. But this was our estimate when we saw the picture in Whistler's studio. Later it was simply ruined, for he worked on it too.

Whistler often saw dealers who came for his prints. On two memorable afternoons Mr. David Kennedy brought the large MacGeorge Collection of Whistler's etchings, which he had purchased in Glasgow, for Whistler to look over, and, in some cases, we believe, to sign them. He went through as many as he could, commenting on their state and their preservation. There were some he had not seen for years, and Mr. Ionides, who was present on one of the afternoons, seemed to know more about them than Whistler. He soon tired, and was not to be revived by the bottle of American cocktails which Mr. Kennedy, to his complete approval, also brought. Several times we found him going through the accumulation of " charming things " from the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. Many he did not think so charming were, we understand, destroyed by him. So Miss Birnie Philip maintains, and Mr. Lavery told us that he was calling at Cheyne Walk one afternoon when Whistler said he had been burning things. We are unable to state if a reliable list was made of what was destroyed and what was kept. Some days Whistler read us

parts of his earlier correspondence—the "wonderful letters" to the Fine Art Society during the Venetian period. And once, tired though he was, he insisted on reading to E. just once more his letter to a dealer, who had threatened him with a writ and whom he warned of the appearance he would make, "with one hand presenting a Sir Joshua to the nation, with the other serving a writ on Whistler. Well indeed is it that the right hand knows not always what the left hand doeth."

In November he sent the *Little Cardinal*, which had been at the *Salon* the previous summer, to the Portrait Painters' Exhibition. Several critics spoke of it as a work already seen, giving the impression, he thought, that it dated back many years. He wrote to the *Standard* to contradict this impression, Wedmore again having blundered. We called to see him on the afternoon the letter was written, and he was in great glee. He said:

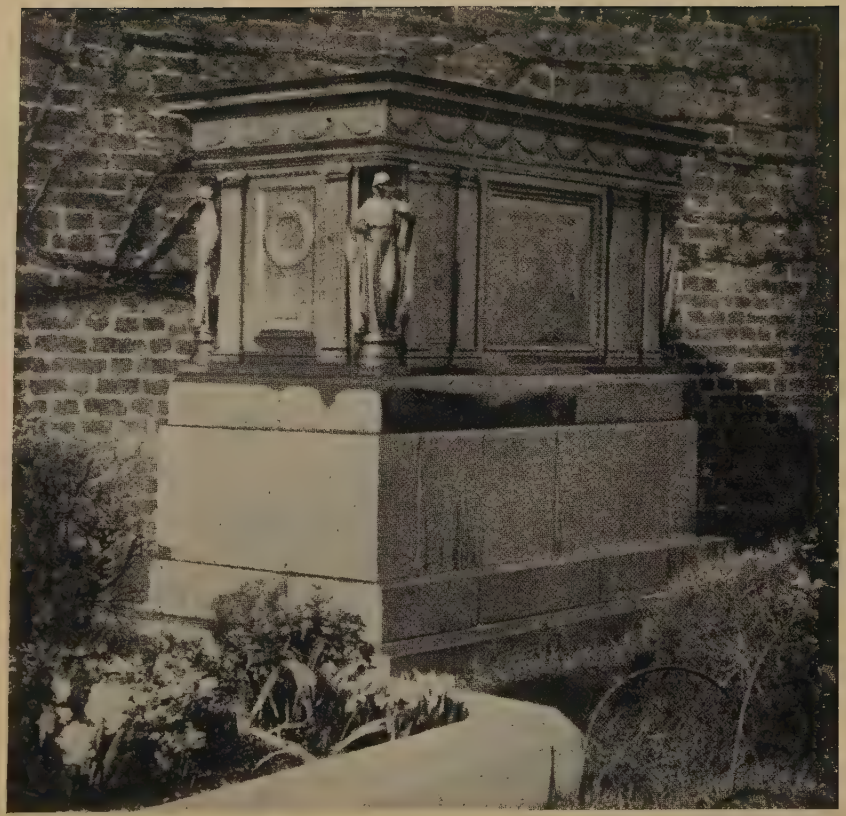
"The letter is one of my best. I described Wedmore as Podsnap—an inspiration, isn't it? With the discovery of Podsnap in art criticism I almost feel the thump of Newton's apple on my head, and this I have said. Heinemann promises to take it himself to the editor of the *Standard*, and really the whole thing has such a flavour of intrigue that I do believe it has made me well again!"

He planned to publish the criticism, his letter, the answers, and his final comments in a brown-covered pamphlet, a scheme begun but, owing to his feeble health, never carried out. To an exhibition of old silver at the Fine Art Society's he lent many of his finest pieces and insisted upon their being shown together in a case apart, and arranged according to his instructions. His silver, like everything belonging to him, was a proof of his exquisite taste and faultless judgment. It was chosen, not for historic interest, nor for rarity, but for elegance of form and simplicity of ornament. The other collections in the exhibition were set out on red velvet; his, with which he sent some of his blue-and-white china, was placed on his simple white table linen marked with the Butterfly. After we had been to the exhibition, he asked us for every detail:

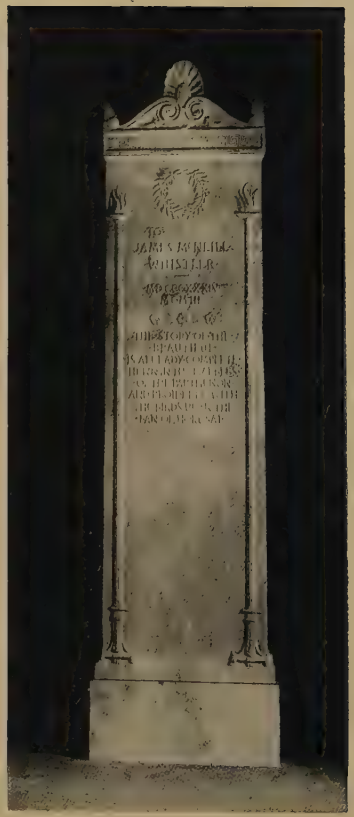
"How did the white, the beautiful napkins look? Didn't the slight hint of blue in the Japanese stand and the few perfect plates tell? Didn't the other cases seem vulgar in comparison? and didn't the simplicity of my silver, evidently for use and cared for, make the rest look like museum specimens?"

GALLERY AT THE LONDON MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

GALLERY AT THE BOSTON MEMORIAL EXHIBITION



WHISTLER'S GRAVE IN CHISWICK CEMETERY ADJOINING CHISWICK CHURCHYARD



MONUMENT IN WHISTLER'S MEMORY AT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT

He examined the catalogue, found fault with it because the McNeill, of which he was so proud, was misspelt, and he could not understand why there were comparatively fewer entries and shorter descriptions of his case than of others where history supplied an elaborate text.

Notwithstanding his state, he forgot none of the old courtesies. When, in November, Sir James Guthrie was elected to the Presidency of the Royal Scottish Academy, he telegraphed his congratulations, and was repaid by his pleasure when Guthrie, still a member of the Council of the International, telegraphed back, "Warmest thanks, my President." On New Year's Day (1903) we received the card of good wishes it was his custom to send to his friends—a visiting-card with greetings written by himself and signed with the Butterfly. Though he could not go to the meetings of the International, the business done at each had to be immediately reported, and when the annual dinner was given he considered every detail, even to the point of revising the *menu* and sending special directions for the salad. He had great pleasure in the degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by Glasgow University, at the suggestion of Sir James Guthrie and Professor Walter Raleigh. Dr. D. S. MacColl, at their request, we believe, and after consulting J., approached him first to make sure that the honour would be accepted. There was a gleam of the old "wickedness" when Dr. MacColl called. Whistler appointed a Sunday, asking him to lunch, but when he arrived at the appointed hour he was sent upstairs to the unused drawing-room and supplied with *Reynolds'*, a Radical sheet adored by Whistler because of its wholesale abuse of the "Islander." And Whistler said: "When at last he was summoned to the studio, I told him it was the paper that of course he always wanted to read at the Club, but was ashamed to be seen with! And all through lunch I had nothing to say of art—I talked of nothing except West Point."

However, when MacColl had a chance to explain why he came, Whistler expressed his pleasure in receiving the degree. We recall his pains with his letter of acknowledgment after the official announcement came in March, his concern for the correct word and the well-turned phrase, his anxiety that there should be no mistake in the Principal's title and honorary initials. It illustrates his care for detail if we add that, before writing the address, he sent a note, submitting it, next

door, to Mr. and Mrs. Walton, who were Scotch, he said, and would know. Another pleasure came from the deference shown him by the Art Department of the Universal Exposition of 1904 at St. Louis. Early in 1903 Professor Halsey C. Ives, Chief of the Art Department, was in London, and went with J. to call on Whistler and to ask him to serve as Chairman of the Committee, of which Sargent, Abbey, and J. were members, for the selection of work by American artists in England. The invitation was a formal recognition of Whistler's position, and he accepted, though he did not live to occupy the post.

These months were not without worries. News of books about him, in preparation or recently published, annoyed him, as he had hoped to prevent such enterprises by giving us his authority for the work to which his illness was a serious interruption. We called one afternoon when he was worrying himself into a fever over the latest attempt of which he had heard, and was unable to think or talk of anything except the insolence of people who undertook to write about him and prepare a biography without consulting him and his wishes. As he talked he complained of pains in his back, and his restlessness was distressing to see. Another afternoon, he was, on the contrary, chuckling over Mr. Elbert Hubbard's *Whistler* in the *Little Journeys* series. He read us passages :

" Really with this book I can be amused—I have to laugh. I don't know how many people have taken my name in print, and, you know, usually I am furious. But the intimate tone of this is something quite new. What would my dear Mummy—don't you know, as you see her with her folded hands at the Luxembourg—have said to this story of my father's courtship ? And our stay in Russia—our arrival in London—why, the account of my mother and me coming to Chelsea and finding lodgings makes you almost see us—wanderers—bundles at the end of long sticks over our shoulders—arriving footsore and weary at the hour of sunset. Amazing !—it would be worth while, you know, to describe, not the book, but the effect on me reading it."

He was looking desperately ill the day he told us that Montesquiou had sold his portrait, and he was not consoled by the fact that Mr. Canfield was the purchaser, so that it would remain, for the present at least, in America. He was the more hurt because Montesquiou was

a friend and, " as you know, the descendant of a long distinguished line of French noblemen."

There were unnecessary worries. Mr. Freer sent some of Whistler's pictures to the Winter Exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. The jury awarded him the Academy's Gold Medal of Honour, and, to assure to the pictures the place of greatest distinction where they would look best, hung them before anything was installed, building up a screen for them in the most important room, and beginning the numbers in the catalogue with them. For some reason Mr. Freer did not approve of the hanging and seems to have misunderstood the motives for it. The secretary, Mr. Harrison Morris, could make no change. As the incident was reported to Whistler he fancied a slight in the arrangement which was meant to do him honour. A similar incident occurred in the Spring Exhibition of the Society of American Artists in New York, where, also, Mr. Freer objected to the place chosen for Whistler's work. Whistler, as a result, was disturbed by the idea that American artists were treating him with indifference or contempt, though this was at the time when their acceptance of him as master was complete and their eagerness to proclaim it great. Whistler went so far as to say that he never wished work of his to hang again in the Pennsylvania Academy, and in regard to the New York Exhibition he wrote protesting to the New York papers. The agitation and excitement did him no good, and in his weakness such small worries were magnified into grave troubles. It is the more to be regretted because, on all sides, in America he was honoured. The fault was Mr. Freer's inability to understand artistic matters. Mr. Will H. Low and other artists tried as well as they could to explain things to Whistler, but Mr. Freer succeeded in prejudicing him to the day of his death against the Pennsylvania Academy, which had done more than any other American art institution to show its appreciation. Americans may have been slow in acknowledging him officially, but that was because they knew little of his work. They began to make amends long before his death, and their eagerness to possess his work may be contrasted to the indifference in England or in Germany, where it is said a Whistler was bought for Berlin by Dr. Bode for two thousand pounds, but was returned to the dealers by the Emperor's command. The *Sarasate* had been purchased

for the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh in November 1896, the first picture, Mr. Beattie, the Director, tells us, bought for the gallery, and we believe the first Whistler bought for any American gallery. It is prized as one of the most important works in the collection, and, though it cost the Institute five thousand dollars, was insured for thirty thousand when it went to the Rome Exhibition in the spring of 1911. We were sorry when last in Pittsburgh to see that it is cracking. *The Yellow Buskin* was in the Wilstach Collection, Philadelphia, and *The Master Smith* and *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts before 1903, and hardly an American collector of note was not seeking to include Whistlers in his collection. Now the Chicago Institute has *Southampton Water* and the Metropolitan in New York has the *Irving*, *Connie Gilchrist*, *Cremorne Gardens*, and several important studies, and has purchased from M. Duret his own large portrait and been presented by Mr. E. G. Kennedy with his small one. M. Duret parted with his because he felt he was growing old. He had had many offers from private collectors, but he wished to know the painting was safe in a museum. Two great masters had painted him, Manet and Whistler, he said to us shortly after the sale, and both portraits are now in public g lleries. *The Fur Jacket* is at Worcester, and in the Brooklyn Institute is the very unfinished and unsatisfactory commencement of *Florence Leyland*. The *Lange Leizen* is in the Johnson Collection, Philadelphia. The Avery collection of etchings is in the New York Public Library, and Charles L. Freer has donated to the National Gallery at Washington his entire collection, the largest in the world, while we have given our collection of Whistleriana to the Library of Congress; the best possible refutation to the nonsense talked about want of appreciation by many self-styled critics, several of whom have been imported into America and England since Whistler's death.

Whistler's health varied so during the winter that we were often encouraged to hope. But with the spring hope lessened with every visit. To consult our notes is to realise, more fully than at the time, how surely the end was approaching. The afternoons of sleep increased with the increasing weakness of his heart. He could not shake off the influenza cold which was dragging him down, and he lived in constant fear of infection from others if anybody even sneezed in his presence. "I can't risk any more microbes—I've about enough of my own." At

times his cough was so bad that he was afraid to talk, and he would write what he wanted to say; it was his tonsils, he explained. There were visits when, from the moment we came until we left, he worried, first because the windows were open, then because they were shut, and his impatience if the doctor's visit was delayed would have exhausted a stronger man. J. dined with him on May 14, when there was a rekindling of gaiety. He showed the portrait of Mr. Canfield; he played dominoes for hours; at dinner, when a gooseberry tart was served, he apologised for the "Island." But after this there was no more gaiety for us to record. A few days later J. went abroad for several weeks, and Mr. Heinemann sailed for America. When he said good-bye to Whistler he was entrusted with innumerable commissions. He was to find out the truth concerning the treatment of Whistler's pictures in Philadelphia and New York, to discover who his new unauthorised biographers were, what artists and literary people were saying, what dealers were doing, and, when he returned, then they would "keep house together again." This was the moment when Mr. Heinemann took another flat, with the identical arrangements of the first, in Whitehall Court, so that they could go back to the old life. But before he returned the end had come.

Fortunately, while Mr. Heinemann and J. were away, Mr. Freer arrived in London on his annual visit, and he was free to devote himself to Whistler, whom he drove out whenever Whistler had the strength. But this was not for long, and with her visit to him on July 1 E. gave up hope. He was in bed, but hearing that she was there, he sent for her. There was a vague look in his eyes, as if the old fires were burnt out. He seemed in a stupor and spoke only twice with difficulty. Miss Birnie Philip referred to his want of appetite and the turtle soup ordered by the doctor, which they got from the correct place in the City. "Shocking! shocking!" Whistler broke in slowly, and then after a minute or two, "You know, now we are all in the City!" Miss Birnie Philip wanted to give tea to E., who, seeing how ill he was, thought it wiser not to stay, and after some ten minutes said good-bye. "No wonder," Whistler murmured, "you go from a house where they don't give you anything to eat." E.'s next visit was on the 6th. The doctor had been with him, he was up, dressed, and had been out for a drive. But he looked worse, his eyes vaguer, giving the impression of

a man in a stupor. He said not a word until she was leaving, and then his one remark was, " You are looking very nice."

Reports of his feebleness were brought to us by many, among others by M. Duret. In July he came to London, and was deeply moved by the condition in which he found Whistler, who, he thought, wanted to say things when alone in the studio with him, but the day of his first visit could not utter a word. And after a second visit, after an hour with Whistler, who again struggled to talk and could not, Duret felt it was the last time he would see Whistler. It was, and in his sorrow he could but recall the days together gone for ever.

On the 14th E. called again, and again Whistler was dressed and in the studio, and there were pictures on the easels. He seemed better, though his face was sunken and in his eyes was that terrible vagueness. Now he talked, and a touch of gallantry was in his greeting, " I wish I felt as well as you look." He asked about Henley, the news of whose death had come a day or two before. He watched the little mother cat as she ran about the studio. There was a return of vigour in his voice when Miss Birnie Philip brought him a cup of chicken broth and he cried, " Take the damned thing away," and his old charm was in the apology that followed, but, he said, if he ate every half-hour or so as the doctor wanted, how could he be expected to have an appetite for dinner ? He dozed a little, but woke up quickly with a show of interest in everything, and when, on the arrival of Mr. Lavery, E. got up to go, fearing that more than one visitor would tire him, he asked " But why do you go so soon ? " and these were the last words he ever spoke to her.

When J. returned to town, on Friday the 17th, he immediately started for Chelsea, but met Mr. T. R. Way, who had been lunching with Mr. Freer at the Carlton, and from whom he learnt that Whistler and Mr. Freer were to go for a drive.

There was no drive that afternoon—no drive ever again. The illness had been long, the end was swift. Whistler was dying before Mr. Freer reached the house. On Thursday he had seemed much better, had gone for a drive, and was so well at dinner that Mrs. Whibley told him laughingly he would soon again be dressing to dine. But after lunch on Friday she was called hurriedly to the studio, where Miss Birnie Philip was already. They realised the seriousness of the attack. The doctor was sent for, but the need for him had passed.

The papers during the next few days showed how Whistler's fame had grown. We saw another side which the public could not see—the affection in which he was held by those who knew him intimately. Many came to us at once: M. Duret, who had lost the last of his old comrades—first Manet, then Zola, and now Whistler, with whom the best hours of his life were spent; Mr. Kennedy, whose business relations with Whistler had developed into warm friendship; Sir John Lavery, Professor Sauter, Mr. Harry Wilson, their one thought to express their love and reverence for their President. Other artists followed, others wrote, and our sorrow for the friend was tempered by knowing how deep and widespread was the regret for the master. Mr. Heinemann returned from New York too late to see Whistler again, and both he and J. were spared the sad memory of Whistler with the life faded from his face, the light gone from his eyes.

The funeral took place on Wednesday, July 22. The service was held in old Chelsea Church, to which he had so often walked with his mother from Lindsey Row. There was a comparatively small attendance. The members of his own family who came were his sister-in-law, Mrs. William Whistler, and his nieces, Mrs. Thynne and Mrs. Réveillon. The Society with which, in his last years, he had identified his interests was represented by the Council: Professor Sauter, Mr. Harry Wilson, Mr. Francis Howard, Mr. Ludovici, Mr. Stirling Lee, Mr. Neven du Mont, Mr. E. A. Walton, and J. Here and there were friends, Mr. Alan S. Cole, Mr. Heinemann, Mrs. Edwin A. Abbey, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, Mr. W. C. Alexander, Mr. Clifford Addams, Mr. Jonathan Sturgis; and here and there Academicians, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and Sir Alfred East. But Whistler, who valued official recognition, was given none. No one from the American Embassy paid the last tribute of respect to the most distinguished American citizen who ever lived in London. No one from the French Embassy attended the funeral of the Officer of the Legion of Honour. No one from the German Embassy joined in the last rites of the member of two German Royal Academies and the Knight of the Order of St. Michael of Bavaria. Nor was anyone present from the Italian Embassy, though Whistler was Commander of the Crown of Italy and member of the Academy of St. Luke. The only body officially represented besides the International was the Royal

Scottish Academy. The police came to restrain the crowd, but there was no crowd.

The coffin was carried the short distance from the house to the church along the shores of the river he made his own. It was covered with a purple pall, upon which lay a wreath of gold laurel leaves sent by his Society. The pall-bearers were M. Théodore Duret, Sir James Guthrie, Sir John Lavery, Edwin A. Abbey, George Vanderbilt, and Mr. Charles L. Freer. The little funeral procession that walked with the coffin from the house to the church included Miss Birnie Philip, Mrs. Charles Whibley, their sisters, brother, and nephews, Mr. William Webb, and Arthur Studd, but none of his own family, none of the group with whom he had been most intimate in his last years. After the burial service was read, the procession re-formed, and the family, the Council of the International, and a few friends went to the grave-yard at Chiswick. It was a grey, stormy summer day, and as the clergyman said the last prayers, and the coffin was lowered, the thick London atmosphere wrapped the green enclosure in the magic and mystery that Whistler was the first to see and to reveal. The grave was made by the side of his wife under a wall covered with clematis. A tomb designed by his stepson, E. Godwin, now covers the little plot of ground where Whistler, the greatest artist and most striking personality of the nineteenth century, lies at rest in a remote corner of the London he loved, not far from the house, and nearer the grave, of Hogarth, who had been to him the greatest English master from the days of his boyhood in St. Petersburg.

THE END OF THE LIFE OF JAMES ABBOTT McNEILL WHISTLER. HIS NAME AND HIS FAME WILL LIVE FOR EVER. JOSEPH PENNELL. ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL

Printed at The Whitefriars Press

APPENDIX

PAGE 291, line 29.—" When you ask me to say something about the illustrious and lamented Whistler, you do not, of course, want me to add my contribution to the rich pyramid of admiration and praise that has already been raised to his glory.

" What you must, of course, be thinking of, is anything special and picturesque that I may be able to add to your biography of the great artist.

" Well as I knew and loved his works, I had but a passing glimpse of his person.

" Here are two interesting traits connected with it.

" Some few years ago, he was very much disturbed about a piracy committed in Belgium by a foreigner living at Antwerp, of his curious book, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*. One day he appeared in my study, and said to me with a sarcastic smile : ' I should like you to be my counsel in this little affair, because I have been told that you, like myself, practise the gentle art of making enemies.'

" The case was won at Antwerp with the collaboration of my *confrère*, M. Maeterlinck, a relative of the poet who is such an honour to our country. The victory was celebrated at his house. When Whistler, the hero of the festivity, arrived at this hospitable abode, he was a long time in the ante-room. The maid who had let him in came, very much amazed, to the drawing-room where we were awaiting him, and said in Flemish : ' Madame, there is an actor in the ante-room ; he is doing his hair before the looking-glass, he is putting on pomade, painting and powdering his face.' After a long interval, Whistler appeared, courteous, correct, waxed and anointed, resplendent as the butterfly which his name recalls, and with which he signed some of the notes he used to write to his counsel.

" This is all I can offer you.

" I have asked M. Maeterlinck for any documents connected with

this episode he might have. All his researches have been in vain. Although so many insignificant papers have been preserved, Fate the perverse has allowed these precious fragments to disappear."

Page 415, line 6.—" Whistler was a painter whose drawing had great depth, and this was prepared for by good studies, for he must have studied assiduously.

" His feeling for form was not only that of a good painter, it was that of a sculptor. He had an extraordinary delicacy of sentiment, which made some people think that his basis was not very strong, whereas it was, on the contrary, both strong and firm.

" He understood atmosphere most admirably, and one of his pictures which made a very deep impression on me, *The Thames at Chelsea*, is a marvel of depth and space. The landscape in itself is nothing; there is merely this great extent of atmosphere, rendered with consummate art.

" Whistler's art will lose nothing by the lapse of time; it will gain; for one of its qualities is energy, another is delicacy; but the greatest of all is its mastery of drawing."

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